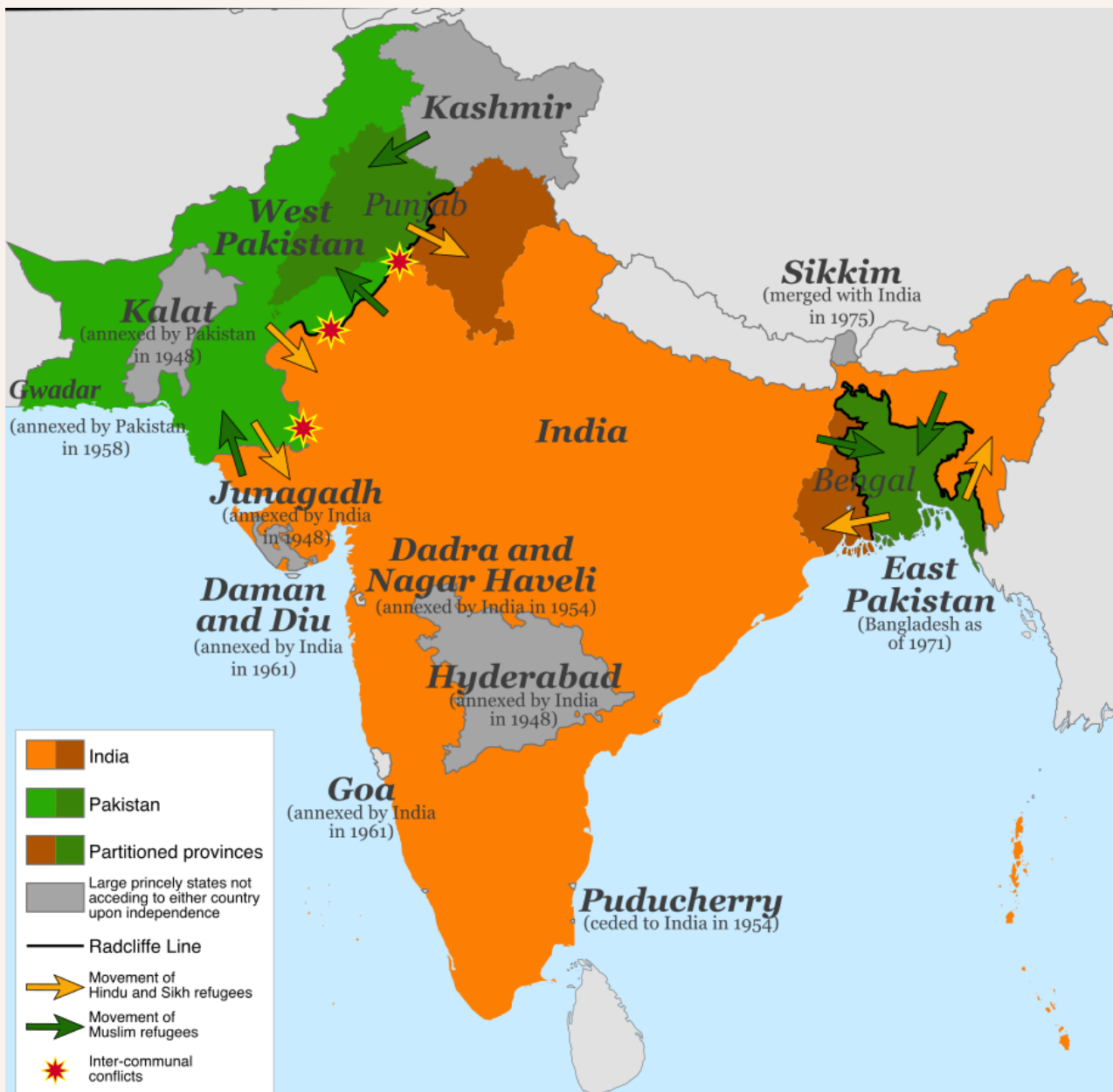


# Indian National Movement



**M.A. Part - I**  
**History Paper - II**  
**(Option - E) Indian National Movement**  
**(1857 A.D to 1947 A.D.)**

**Objectives :** To enable students to understand the factors leading to the rise of Nationalism. To enable students to understand Gandhiji, his movements and movements of other organizations and to understand the constitutional development and the rise of new forces.

**Modules**

**1. Historiography of the Indian National Movement**

- a) Nationalist, Marxist and Subaltern Schools
- b) Cambridge School
- c) Revolt of 1857

**2. Rise of Socio-Political Consciousness**

- a) Growth of Western Education and its impact on Socio Religious Movement
- b) British Economic Policies and their Impacts
- c) The founding of Indian National Congress, its Policies and Programme

**3. Growth of Nationalism**

- a) Gandhiji and his Movements
- b) All India Muslim League
- c) Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

#### 4. Towards Independence

- a) Constitutional Developments
- b) Indian National Army, Naval Mutiny of 1946, Freedom and Partition
- c) The Depressed Classes and Women as New Forces

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**MODULE - I****1****HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN  
NATIONAL MOVEMENT  
(A1) Nationalist School****UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Contributory Factors
- 1.3 The content of Nationalist Historiography:
- 1.4 Some Eminent Nationalist Historians
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Broad Questions.
- 1.7 Additional Readings.

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**1.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After the completion of study of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the nationalist school of historiography of the Indian National Movement.
- Comprehend the contributory factors to the writing of historiography of the Indian National Movement.
- Explain the search for national identity.
- Grasp the imperialist attack on Indian culture and civilization.
- Know the content of the nationalist historiography.
- Summarize the writings of some eminent nationalist historians.

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**1.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Historiography means the history of historical writing or the art of writing history. It is the history of history. Historiography tells us the story of successive stages in the evolution of historical writings. It includes the evolution of the ideas and techniques associated with the writing of history and changing attitudes

towards the nature of history itself. Eventually it includes the study of the development of man's senses for the past.

There are differences in the nature, quality and quantity of historical literature in different ages and different people. These differences represented the changes in social life, beliefs in society, the presence or absence of the sense of history. The pace of change is greater ever since the study of the past came increasingly under the influence of various ideas. Thus Historiography is trying to trace these changes through the centuries. Arthur Marwick says that history is the historian's reconstruction of the past whereas the historiography is neither only theory nor only practice but it is the real history of historical thoughts. History writing began due to the early compositions of the ancient Greeks and the Chinese which faced several difficulties and uncertainty due to absence of chronology and method of criticism even then this crude beginning of history writing has made a tremendous progress. It is pertinent to trace how the history writing of Indian National Movement came into existence. What were the problems and how they were solved, are surveyed in the foregoing description, analysis and a detail account them is given. Although the history of India is very old and rich, the Indian historiography is comparatively of recent origin. During the nineteenth century, emergence of new research papers, articles, addresses and monographs brought out new directions in research, which led to evolve the writing of Indian historiography, in which the nationalist school is one of the most important approaches. Rousseau's stress on feeling and passion and Herder's doctrine of the 'genius of nations', of national culture and national character formed the philosophy of nationalism. Herder says that each national culture is a unique entity with its own inherent character. The national character is expressed in its language, literature, art and in its moral code, which determines the history of a people. Nationalism is a powerful sentiment, it is essentially spiritual in character and it is the will of the people to live together. This sentiment of unity is produced by the race of the community, Language, religion, geographic unity, common political aspirations and common historical development. The nation state is the normal form of political organisation in the modern world.

The nationalist historians used to invoke the spirit of nations past the most, they used to emphasis on people rather than the state, which transformed the exclusive idea of political history and embraced the material & spiritual development of man in society. The spirit of resurgent nationalism gave a story impetus to historical studies and supplied a powerful motive for historical investigation in so far as people endeavored to trace the roots of their national identity. For this reason the nineteenth century was the century of nationalism in Europe and the century of Great history writing of national movements.

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## **1.2 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS:**

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Following were some of the contributory factors to the writing of historiography of Indian National Movement:

### **1.2.1 The Search for National Identity:**

Although India came under westernization, followed westerns life in dress, manners and customs but the educated Indians began to think to make Indians real Indian and not English. They never wanted the westerns civilization to displace the Indian civilization as Macaulay and the missionaries desired. They wanted only the West should revitalize the Indian culture as Raja Ram Mohan Roy emphasized the most. Hence these educated Indians began to reform their age old socio-religious scenario and rejuvenate their ancient culture. This trend began to create a sense of self reliance, self respect and self confidence among the Indians which was suppressed for a longer period. This self confidence bred the national consciousness on a large scale and aspired for freedom from the foreign rule. This national consciousness, however, was to be sustained and promoted by historical consciousness i.e. the knowledge of people's past.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee says that in order to create a sense of unity, national pride and desire for freedom, there is a fundamental need to study and write history of the country. India being subject country for many centuries, its history is not described and interpreted by Indian historians. In his 'Bibidha Prabandha' Chatterjee says that there is no Hindu History, no one glorifies our noble qualities, if we do not loud them, then there will be no nationalism. The warlike prowess of Romans is found in the history of Roman people, the heroism of Greeks is found in the writing of Greek histories, the Mussalman velour in battles covered in the records of Muslims. But there is no such glorification of noble qualities of Indians because, there is no written evidence by the Indians on their own. When Bankim Chandra pointed out this deficiency then the several historians began to address to the same deficiency with national spirit and ideology which gave birth to the nationalist school of Indian historiography.

### **1.2.2 Imperialist Attack On Indian Culture and Civilization:**

The imperial attack on the Indian culture and civilization is clearly seen in the books of James Mill. He in his history and the account of Hindu civilization wrote that Indians are rude and excelled in the qualities of slave. In the same way another British historian Vicent Smith in his account of Alexander is invasion on India tried to prove that Europeans were superior in warfare than Indians. He further says that the perennial political chaos in India, their inability to unite and rule themselves properly made the British rule absolutely permanent in India. Mountstuarst Elphinstance

administrator turned historians mentions that the Indian foreign trade was conducted by Greeks and the Arabs and the Arabs easily overrun India as Persia. The British historians often tried to underestimate the Indian culture and suggested the lowest possible dates for the Vedas and the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Even they hinted that the Indians might have borrowed their culture from the Greeks but they did not give any evidence to prove it. The European historians mischievously professed that Indian drama, mathematics, philosophy and astronomy were derived from the Greek civilization and the most popular Krishna culture of India might have been developed from the Jesus Christ. The Christian missionaries highlighted deliberately the religious superstition, social abuses and the practice of Sati in Indian society where as they systematically ignored the burning of heretics, practice of slavery, and serfdom in the European societies. This led the Indian historians and philosophers to prepare themselves to defend the imperial attack on their culture and civilization which generated historical writings, came to be known as the nationalist school of Indian historiography.

### **Check your Progress:**

1. Explain briefly the nationalist school of historiography.

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### **1.3 THE CONTENT OF NATIONALIST HISTORIOGRAPHY:**

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The Indian nationalist school of historiography came into existence in reaction of the prejudices of the British imperialist historiography against India. The Indian nationalist historiography aimed the most to search out the national identity in its quest and prove India the most nationalist state. The rising generation of Indian nationalist historians infested with the legitimate national pride, tried to vindicate their national culture against the unfounded charges of Europeans specially the British historians against Indian nation and nationalism. R.C.Majumdar says that the European historians misunderstood the several points of Indian national interest and misrepresented them everywhere in their writings. The Indian historians who so ever corrected them without conflicting



with the scientific approach came to be known as the Indian nationalist historians. Apart from this they tried to represent the following in the proper and nationalistic perspective.

### **1. Religion and Society:**

The British historians attack on the Indian religion and society was defended by the Indian reformers first in their reforms, they announced time to time. The Indian nationalist School and its historians like Rajnarain, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Sasadhar Tarkachudasmani defended the Indian religion and society in their writings. Dayananda Saraswati, who amalgamated orthodoxy with liberalism and defended Hinduism on the rational lines. He says that the religion and society mentioned in the Vedas is the pure form of Hinduism in which systems like caste and Sati were created in later period and not sectioned by the original faith. Consequently, woman began to enjoy very high status in the Hindu Society. Thus, this spirit helped the nationalist school of Indian historiography to develop considerably.

### **2. Material Culture:**

The archaeological researches carried out by Indian as well as European research scholars dispelled the inferiority of Indian culture and proved that it was far ahead than the European culture. Romesh Chandra Dutta in three volumes on the civilization in Ancient India excelled in it and brought out such relevant data to prove it. R.C.Majumdar, one of the Indian historians calls it as the first Indian national history. Ramesh Chandra Dutta assigned 1200B.C. the year of the compilation of the Rig Veda where as B.G.Tilak one of the Sanskrit scholars assigned 4000B.C. the year of composition on the basis of astronomical data. R.K.Mukharjee's book, A history of Indian Shipping and Maritime Activities proved that ancient India knew the art of building big ships and conducted maritime trade with various ancient civilizations. The researches proved that the ancient Indians had achieved progress in science, technology even in firearm and the building of aeroplanes. The most important claim of the Indian historians is that the Aryans were originally from India itself and then they spread to various parts of European and other countries in the world.

### **3. Politics and Administration:**

The British historians tried to underestimate the political and administrative system in India at each and every step. They said that India had several sects and creeds. Therefore, it could not qualify to be a nation. But historian R.K.Mukharjee in his scholarly thesis, the 'Fundamental Unity of India' mention that religious unity, spiritual fellowship among the Hindus and their ideal of an all India empire formed the basis for Indian nationalism in the past. The demand of educated Indians for representative institutions and their share in the administration of the country clearly suggest the rise of

nationalism among them. K.P.Jayaswal another historian in his 'Hindu Polity' demonstrated that a constitutional form of Government, address from the throne and the voting of grants existed during the period of Sixteen Mahajan Padas who were popularly called Ganarajayas of ancient India. Naturally, these ideals of politics and administration of ancient India boosted the nationalist school of Indian historiography for its manifestation and generated the Indian National Movement.

#### **4. Military:**

The British historians underestimated the Indian military tactics and glorified their easy conquest of India. But the nationalist School of Indian historiography debunked it and brought to the notice the reality of the British, who used treacherous tactics in the Battle of Plassey (1757) and bribed some people in their victory of Sikh wars. Indian military is popular for her prowess since the ancient period. Her tactical movements of war had spread every corner of the world and this was the reason that the army of Alexander never wanted to enter the territories of Nanda Empire. The stories of military skill of Maratha and Rajput rulers which nationalist school of Indian historiography spread everywhere. That led Indians to unite and generate nationalism.

#### **5. Hatred of the British:**

The Indian historians of nationalist school created hatred against the unjust rule and politics of the British in India. Among such historians Dadabhai Naoroji, R.C.Dutt, B.D.Basu, R.C.Majumdar, V.D.Savarkar, S.B.Choudhary and many others were in forefront. Although all the British officials were against the Indians, Robert Clive, Warren Hastings, Wellesley, Dalhousie and Lord Macaulay were more imperialist and exploited the Indians the most and invited much more hatred of Indians. The Indian historians of nationalist school criticized the wanton education system of Macaulay. R.C.Majumdar brought the British policies before the bar of the world. His book titled 'Clive the Forger' created almost hatred against the treachery of Robert Clive. Thus, this helped the nationalist school of Indian historiography a lot and caused to develop nationalism throughout the country.

#### **6. Reinterpretation of Indian History:**

To counter the attack of British on India, the Indian historians began to reinterpret their history and infuse nationalism throughout the country. V.D.Savarkar reinterpreted the history of the uprising of 1857 and called it the first war of Indian independence. S.B.Choudhary's 'Civil Rebellion in the Indian Military 1857-1859', characterized the uprising of 1857 as the national war of independence. In order to counter the British propaganda the Hindu-Muslim differences was a major hurdle in granting the dominion status to India, the nationalist Indian

historians reinterpreted the entire Medieval Indian history and proved that the Hindu-Muslims always behaved as brothers with each other which consequently, led to form a nation. The process of reinterpretation of Indian history was continued further by Tarachand, who in his book, 'Influence of Islam on Indian culture', professed that the conglomeration of Hindu-Muslim culture cemented them into Indian nation. Thus, the reinterpretation of Indian history became a major theme of nationalist school of Indian Historiography.

#### **1.2.4 Defects of Nationalist School of Indian Historiography:**

The Indian nationalist historiography engaged in search for national identity and meeting charges of European historians on Indian life and culture which projected overtly or covertly a lack of historical property or historicity in its various forms, contents and its nature. This weakness is apparent in the account so far presented by the historians. Along with this weakness the methodical deflects, chauvinistic claims, self contradiction and communalism are some other lapses in the nationalist school of Indian historiography.

##### **1. Methodological Defect:**

The nationalist historiography suffers the defect of methodological lapses as the deviation from the ideal of objectivity. In order to prove the existence of responsible government in ancient India, historian Jayaswal put new interpretations on words, passages in inscriptions and literary texts. A.L.Basham tells that Jayaswal in his book 'Hindu Policy' employed a large range of sources in the manner of a barrister trying to win a favourable judgement. He emphasised every passage to support his case without considering the virtual evidence which ultimately went against him.

##### **2. Chauvinistic Claims:**

Romila Thapar says that Indian nationalist historians glorified their past in order to counter the criticism of J.S.Mill to India, which was very necessary step to build up national and self-respect among the Indians. The glorious Indian past was a compensation for the humiliating present conditions at the hands of English. The claim of the Indian origin of Aryans, the pre-Harappan antiquity of the Vedic culture, denial of foreign influence on Indian civilization, the superiority of the spiritual quality of Indian culture and the existence of political unity on the basis of cultural unity were the part and parcels of this glorification of Indian past. The deep glorification of India's past led some Indian historians to some ridiculous extent as historian Jayaswal asserted the ancient India did not lay behind the modern Europe in the scientific development and India had firearms and aeroplanes during the Epic age. Thus, these claims some historian treat as weaknesses of the Indian nationalist school of historiography.

### **3. Self-Contradiction:**

There are several contradictions appeared in the accounts of Indian nationalist historians as the profession of military power and the values of non-violence, the practice of democratic traditions and the imperial glory, the spiritual superiority of Hinduism, the worldliness of the ancient Indians, the high status of woman in the Vedic period and inferiority position she faced in the later period. Thus, these self-contradictions were weaknesses of the Nationalist School of Indian historiography.

### **4. Communalism:**

It is the direct result of the British policy of divide and rule, undertaken by them for their own advantage. The sensational accounts of the historic struggles of the Rajputs, the Marathas and the Sikhs presented by the nationalist historians felt a dangerous change by the Muslim historians in day today life in the country. The Hindu-Muslims once friends became enemies of each other after the incident of 1857. This enmity was fanned by the literary creations as dramas, poetry, prose and novels which led to the partition of the country. Thus, this is also called as one of the weaknesses of the nationalist school of Indian historiography.

#### **1.2.5 The Strength of Nationalist school of Indian Historiography:**

Although, the nationalist school of Indian historiography has some weaknesses, it has some stimulants and strength, which surpassed the said weaknesses. The nationalist studies received this strength and impetus from the sentiment of nationalism of people themselves. This has happened because, the spirit of nationalist studies brought fore the practical uses of history as was done in the nineteenth century Europe. The Indian nationalists sought their national development not in the immediate period but in their remotest past. They adopted a powerful motive of national spirit for historical investigation. Which quickened the historical research and generated almost nationalism in the Country. In order to meet the imperialist challenges, the Indian nationalist began to study the source material with the Zeal of crusaders, they studied very carefully the movements, epigraphs, coins and a variety of literary sources that opened a new treasure of information, infested the minds of Indians with national fervour and pride and quickened the struggle of Indians for their freedom from the British rule.

### **1. The work of Nationalist Historians:**

There are several historical writings of nationalist historians which occupied the important position in the world of scholarship. Among such writings R.C.Dutt's three volumes of Civilization in Ancient India occupy the place of high merit because they are free from the extravagant claims of later nationalist historians. Romila Thapar says that although, there are several weaknesses in the

writing of nationalist historians they played a significant role in the interpretation of ancient Indian history, because their writing was the result of their conscious opposition to the imperialist historiography. The nationalist historians when realized that the study of the past has the relevance for the present, they adopted a fresh look at the sources and began to interpret them very comprehensively, which brought in several nationalist volumes of history based on the socio-economic political and cultural life of ancient India.

## **2. Growth of Regional and local History:**

The national school of Indian historiography enhanced the interest in the regional and local history. Romila Thapar a noted historian says that the local and regional history is an important off shoot of nationalist historiography, which led to the archeological discoveries and found a huge unexplored source material in various regions. This enabled the historians to correct their earlier generalizations and bring out several regional histories like the, History of Bengal, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka. Neelkant Shastri's history of South India is the part and parcel of the regional and local history which contributed hugely to the writing of nationalist historiography.

## **3. Economic History:**

The national school of Indian historiography became the most important force behind the writings of economic history of India. The British exploited India beyond imagination and reduced it to the most pauperised country in the world. William Digby's prosperous British India is the most important evidence in this regard which led Dadabhai Naorogy and R.C.Dutt to write on the British exploitation of India. Dadabhai Naoroji the proponent of economic drain theory, blamed the British for draining Indian wealth to England and reducing Indians to starvation. R.C.Dutt's two volumes of Economic history of India concun with Dadabhai Naoroji and asserted that the basic cause of India's economic problems should be sought in the undevelopement of India. Thus, the nationalist school of Indian Historiography stimulated to write the economic history of India.

## **4. Cultural History:**

The nationalist school of Indian historiography reveled a very Vast store of information relating to various facts of life of Indian people, which brought in force a new approach of study of culture in ancient India. This is clear from the Survey of Indian history and the work of nationalist historian K.M.Panikar. Naturally, writing of cultural history also began due to the consciousness of Indians about their nationhood. This enabled Indians to reconstruct their history to understand their correct heritage. In short, the Indian nationalist school of historiography stimulated the Indian national movement.

**Check your Progress:**

2. Discuss some of the contributory factors to the writing of nationalist historiography of India.

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## **1.4. SOME EMINENT NATIONALIST HISTORIANS**

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The list of nationalist school of Indian historians is very lengthy as Dadabhai Naoroji, R.C.Dutt, R.G.Bhandarkar, Bhagwanlal Indraji, Bhau Dhaji, Rajendra Mishra, K.P.Jayaswal, Radha Kumud Mukharji, H.C.RayChoudhari, G.S. Sardesai, Jadunath Sarkar, Krishnaswami Aiyangar, Shafat Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Nazim, Istiaq Hussain Qureshi, Zahiruddin Faruki, S.M. Jaffer and M.G.Ranade who wrote most political, dynastic, economic and cultural histories. Due to the space and scope problem, it is not possible to deal with almost all nationalist historians, but it is necessary to deal with some of the important historians who are discussed as under:

### **1.4.1 R.G.Bhandarkar(1837-1925):**

He was one of the nationalist historians and a social reformer. He wrote two monographs as 1. The Early History of the Deccan in 1884 and 2. A Peep into the Early History of India in 1900. He has presented a historical account based on political, social, economic and religious conditions of the western India from the earliest period to the Muslim conquest in his first book whereas in his second book he took a brief survey of the early history of the northern India from the Mauryan period to the end of the Gupta empire. He undertook the critical historical method of inquiry and tried to attain truth and accuracy through rigorous scrutiny of the different kinds of sources. Bhandarkar was more meticulous in analysis and criticism of sources than any other contemporary European scholars which led him to trace several flaws in the writing of V.S. Smith. Although, he was patriotic, he was not anti-British and never shared the tendency of rejecting foreign influence on the development of Indian civilization. He was the subscriber of the Rankean dictum that the historian should describe the past as it actually was. He became the president of the First oriental conference held in 1919.

#### 1.4.2 Romesh Chandra Dutta(1848-1909):

Among the nationalist historians, Romesh Chandra Dutta is popularly known as the economic historian. He stressed upon the importance of literature as source material for social history of India. He relied on sanskrit literature mainly to write his three volumes of 'A History of Civilisation in Ancient India'. Sister Nivedita says that R.C.Dutta understood the Indian mind and their social institutions with the help of literary sources and his book on civilization is an exposition of the national glory to India and the world. It is based on the scientific treatment of the sources, it is rational and of original scholarship. He published two volumes of economic History of India in 1904, which inquired into the nature of British rule in India. He was the first Indian economic analyst, who diagnosed that India's economic problem is the problem agriculture which accrued due to the exorbitant land taxes. He pointed out the two fold objectives of the British colonial economy as production of raw materials in India for British industries and consumption of British manufactured goods in India. Dutta attacked on the home charges and military expenditure of the British and suggested that the government should adopt retrenchment finance. He criticised the British for economic drain of India and the utter poverty of people which became a platform for the rise of Indian national movement.

#### 1.4.3 K. P. Jayaswal(1881-1937):

He was born in a rich family of mirzapur in 1881. After initial education at the London Mission School at Mirzapur, he left for Oxford where he completed his M.A. in History and also qualified for the Bar. He came back to India and wanted to be a lecturer in the University of Calcutta but due to his association with the Indian National Movement the British government kept him away from the university, ultimately he joined the legal profession as advocate in the Calcutta High Court in 1911. He could not continue as a legal practitioner for a long time. He set up the Bihar and Orissa Research Society for research in history and culture in 1914. In 1915, the Research Society published a research journal under the editorship of Kashi Prasad Jayaswal, in which Jayaswal aimed to regenerate the national pride based on the consciousness of the ancient Indian heritage. Jayaswal's book 'Hindu Polity', published in 1924 proved the most outstanding contribution to the nationalist school of Indian historiography. He also authored another book known as 'History of India 150B.C. to 350A.D'. He used a variety of literary, epigraphic and numismatic sources for writing those books and presented his own interpretation where ever required. In order to respond to the imperialist oriental despotism, Jayaswal labouriously thesised that India had the earliest and the most successful republics in its ancient period. He says that the 'Samiti' in Vedic period was an assembly of sovereign representatives, which discussed and decided all matters of the state. The Sabha was a

body of selected men, subordinate to the Samiti. Jayaswal in his second book the Hindu polity, makes it clear that the limited monarchy was in existence in ancient India, in which the office of the king was a creation of the people and he held it with conditions. The Samiti known as the National Assenbly was the real sovereign and was above the king.

Jayaswal further says that the Paura and the Janpada were the two political institutions of the city and acted as a powerful check on the royal authority. In his history of India, he made Bharasiva-Naga the national leader for liberating India from the foreign rule of Sakas and Kushanas. Although, Jayaswal is several theories are questioned by historians like Ghoshal and Altekar, his systematic account of the ancient India stimulated research into the political and constitutional issues of the same period. Prof. Sinha says that K.P.S.Jayaswal argued as a cleaver advocate but not acted as a judge, who examines both sides and comes to his conclusion.

#### **1.4.4 Radha Kumud Mukharji(1880-1963):**

He was born in Bengal, educated at the Presidency college Culcatta and obtained the degree of M.A. in History and English from the University of Culcatta. Although, he became professor of English, he was appointed as the Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi Professor of Ancient Indian history and culture at the Banaras Hindu University. After one year he joined the Mysore University as the First professor of History in 1921, and then he became Head of the University Department of History, Lucknow university and died at the age of 83 in 1963. Nationalist Historian RadhaKumud Mukharji wrote critical monographs on different aspects of the ancient Indian history. Among his research work the History of Indian Shipping and Maritime Activity from the Earliest Times published in 1912, became most popular and made Mukharji one of the well known nationalist and patriotic historians. In this book, Mukharji traces the maritime activity of India in its all forms, from the earliest period to the end of the Mughal period and brings to our notice that how India stood as one of the foremost maritime countries who plied her ships from the shores of Africa Madagascar to the Malay Archipelago for trade and commerce. His another book local self government in ancient India became equally popular. Dr. Mukharji, in his book ancient Indian Education, discussed the evolution and growth of Brahmanical and Buddhist education. His book, 'The Fundamental Unity of India' gives us the idea of India's unity based on the diverse geographical and political concept and common culture of India. Men and Thought in Ancient India , Hindu Civilization, The Gupta Empire and Ancient India are other important books of DR. Mukharji. His Gupta Empire is a monograph which tells us the moral and mental progress that India achieved during the period of Gupta's.



#### 1.4.5 H.C.Raychaudhary(1892-1957):

He joined the University of Calcutta in 1918 and served it till 1952. He authored several books of world repute and standard text books which are followed in colleges and universities in and out side of India. Among such books, 'The Political History of Ancient India from the Accession of Parikshit to the extinction of the Gupta Empire (1936)' Materials for the Study of Early History of the Vaishnavite Seet (1936), Studies in Indian Antiquities (1932) and An advanced History of India are very important. In the first part of his first book Raychaudhary dealt with the period from the accession of King Parikshit to the accession of Bimbisara of Magadha, till the middle of the sixth century B.C. Historian Weih Geiger says that due to Raychaudharys reconstruction of chronological history of Mahabharata, indian chronology is started from 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. instead of 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. This achievement is compared with Niebular, who traced the historical origin of the Roman state. In the second part of his first book, Raychaudhary discussed the period from the accession of Bimbisara to the decline of the Gupta empire. A.L.Basham says that , Raychaudhary drew conclusion based on dry truth and the canons of modern historical methodology. He also belonged to the nationalist school of Indian historiography and the school of Bhandarkar with a mind, which is not hostage to any pre-conceived notion or philosophy but with careful and extreme objectivity. H.C.Raychaudhary co-authored a book, An Advanced History of India with R.C.Majumdar and K.K.Dutta.

#### 1.4.6 Sardar K.M.Panikkar(1895-1963):

He was born at Kavalam kerala in 1895. After completing his initial education at Madras Christian College , he joined Christ Church Oxford, qualified for the Bar, returned to India and joined Aligarh Muslim University in 1919. In 1922, he became Reader in History, University of Calcutta and in 1924, he joined as editor of the Hindustan Times, one of the most popular news papers of that time. He served as the secretary to the chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and worked in various capacity in the counts Princely States like Patiala, Kashmir and Bikaner. Finally, he became Vice-Chancellor of Jammu-Kashmir as well as Mysore universities.

Panikkar wrote the monograph Sri Harsha of Kanauj in 1922, in which he mentions that Harsha deserves to be considered as one of the greatest rules of India. In 1938 he published his lectures delivered at Baroda and dispelled the notion of the European historians that the political thought or the inquiry into the phenomenon of the state was alires to the ancient Indian genius. He traced the history of the trade relations between the European and the west coast of India since the sixteen century in his book Malabar and the Portuguese and Malabar and the Dutch in 1931. In his another book, 'History and the Indian Ocean', he claimed that India never lost its independence till it lost her command of the sea

in the first decade of the sixteenth century and traced the influence of the Indian Ocean in shaping the history of India. Panikkar in his *Geographical Factors in Indian History* says that geography constitutes the permanent basis of history of any nation and determines its internal and external policies as well as it governs the evolution of life in that country as the Himalayas and the seas played an important role in Shaping the life of Indian People. Panikkar tried to remove certain misconceptions, which foreign historians had about India. They said that there was no entity called India, nothing positive and outstanding originated in the country, what ever is there that is originated out side of India. The doctrine of Aryan origin of Indian civilization found no support in Indian literature, they said that it is the result of the theories of the Indo-Germanic scholars who held that every thing valuable and great originated from the Aryan. He in his 'A Survey of Indian History', gave some constructive ideas of the national heritage of India through the developmental process of last five thousand years in ancient India. He professed that Aryo-Dravidian synthesis began at the end of the Rig Vedic age that created Indian civilization. His book *Asia and Western Dominance* raised Panikkar as one of the historians of the world rank. In this book Panikkar made it clear that due to the control of the sea by the Europeans enabled them to extend their economic and political powers over Asia , which brought about a silent revolution in every aspect of Asian life. The western educated intellectuals of Asia assumed leadership of their countries and liberated themselves from the western dominance. He further says that these liberation movements defeated the attempt of Christianization to the Asians by the missionaries. Thus , this created National School of Indian Historiography.

#### **1.4.7 R.C.Majumdar(1858-1980):**

He completed his M.A. and PhD. Degrees in the University of Calcutta and became a Professor of History in the same University. He worked as Vice-Chancellor of Dacca University and was Vice-President of the International Organisation for history set up by the UNESCO for the scientific and cultural development of mankind. He was also appointed as the chief editor of the *Bhartiya Vidya Bhavans* eleven volumes, 'The History and culture of the Indian people'. He produced the books like *Corporate life in Ancient India*, *History of Bengal* and a book on Java. He wrote *Advanced History of India* in collaboration with Prof. Raychaudhary and R.C.Dutta, which is recognized as a standard textbook all over the Country. Majumdar also produced some volumes on the freedom movement of India and gave a new interpretation to the Mutiny of 1857. In his *Historiography of Modern India*, he tried to trace the development of historiography in India and the art of writing history in the country. He was objective in writing history and said that national history as other history should be true in connection with facts and should be reasonable in their interpretation. In order to

call it national the historian should not suppress or white wash every thing in our countries past which is disgraceful. He should admit all the events and point out several other nobles aspects from the evolution of our nation, which would compensate the other aspects i.e. the historian should become a good judge while writing national history. In order to recognize his services to the Indian historiography, Majumdar was elected as President of the All India History Congress and the All India Oriental Conference. Dr. Majumdar a historian of Rankean dictum felt uneasy about the deteriorating standard of historical studies, in answer to this, he wrote in 1968 that history divorced from truth never helped any nation, its future should be stable and should not rest on the quicksands of falsehood. India is at the cross-roads now and I, therefore, urge the young friends to choose the path very carefully, which they want to tread upon.

#### **1.4.8 Surendranath Sen(1890-1962):**

He was born in July, 1890 in East Bengal. After his M.A. in History began to work as a lecturer in History at the Robertson college, Jabalpur. In 1917, he joined the Calcutta university, secured Ph.D. degree for his work Administrative System of the Marathas and obtained D.Litt degree from the Oxford University for his work Military System of the Marathas. Besides this he worked as the keeper of records in the national archives, Professor of History and Vice-Chancellor of Delhi, University and visiting professor in the university of Wisconsin in United States after his super annuation.

His doctoral thesis The Administrative System of the Marathas countered the British calculated view the Marathas were plunderers only. Sen through this work proved that the Marathas were the builders of administrative institutions based on their social and political traditions. Anil Chandra Banerji says that Military System of the Marathas of Dr. Sen is a standard scholarly and pioneering work and gives much more dividend than his book Administrative system of the Marathas. His work on the Revolt of 1857 is an objective and dispassionate account of the event. In 1955, Maulana Azad, the then Education Minister had invited Dr. Sen to write on the Struggle of 1857. He made it clear that although it could not be called cent percent national war of independence, it was not a mere Sepoyee mutiny. He extracted every minute and scattered materials papers like Maulavi Rajab Ali, Munshi Jiwanlal's Diary of the events of mutiny in Delhi and the account of Kedarnath and analyzed this above the pale of any controversy. In his works India through Chinese Eyes, translation of Sabhasad Bakhar and Foreign Biographies of Shivaji, Studies in Indian History off the Main Track, Early Career of Kanhoji Angia and Prachin Banga Patra Sankalen are also important.

Although, There are several other historians belonging to the nationalist school of Indian historiography due to space problem it is not possible to brief all of them within a unit.

**Check your progress:**

3. Describe briefly some of the historians of nationalist school of Indian historiography.
4. What are the major defects of the nationalist school of Indian historiography.
5. Make a brief assessment of K.P.S. Jayaswal as nationalist historian.

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## **1.5. SUMMARY**

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Historiography means the history of historical writing or the art of writing history. It is the history of history. It tells us the story of successive stages in the evolution of historical writings. There is a difference in nature, quality and quantity of historical literature from age to age and person to person. This difference represents the changes and beliefs in society, presence or absence of the sense of history. The pace of change is greater ever since the study of the past came increasingly under the influence of various ideas. Thus, historiography is trying to trace these changes through the centuries.

The nationalist historians used to evoke the spirit of nations past and emphasized on people rather than the state, which transformed the exclusive ideas of political history and embraced the material and spiritual development of man in the society. The spirit of resurgent nationalism gave a strong impetus to historical studies and supplied a powerful motive for historical investigation to trace the roots of their national identity. There were several factors responsible for writing of historiography of Indian national movement as the search for national identity , imperial attack on Indian culture and civilization, the content of nationalist historiography and reinterpretation of Indian history. Although,

some defects developed in the writing of nationalist school of Indian historiography, there were some heartening developments which worked as the strength of the nationalist school of Indian Historiography.

There were several eminent nationalist historians who contributed to the nationalist school of Indian historiography. Among them R.C.Dutta, R.G.Bhandarkar, Bhagwanlal Indraji, Bhau Dhaji, Rajendra Mitra, K.P.Jayaswal, Radha Kumud Mukharji, H.C.RayChoudhari, G.S. Sardesai, Jadunath Sarkar, Krishnaswami Aiyangar, Shafat Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Nazim, Istiaq Hussain Qureshi, Zahiruddin Faruki, S.M. Jaffer and M.G.Ranade were important.

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### 1.6. QUESTIONS

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1. What is nationalist school of Indian historiography? What were the factors responsible for the rise of nationalist school of Indian Historiography?
2. Examine the content and defects of the nationalist school of Indian historiography?
3. Assess the writings of some nationalist historians with special references to Indian national movement?
4. Discuss about the eminent historians of the nationalist school of Indian historiography?

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### 1.7 ADDITIONAL READINGS

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1. Beard, Charles Theory and Practice in Historical Study.
2. Hook, Simey the hero in History : A study in limitation and Possibility.
3. Powicke, F.M. Modern historians and the study of history.
4. Reiner, J.H. History: Its Purposes and Methods.



## **HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT (A2) Marxist School**

### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Some Eminent Marxist Historian.
- 2.3 Assessment of the Marxist school of Indian historiography.
- 2.4 Summary.
- 2.5 Question.
- 2.6 Additional readings.

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### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the Marxist school of Historiography of Indian National movement.
- Grasp the contributions of D.D. Kosambi to Marxist school of historiography of Indian National movement.
- Explain the contribution of R.S.Sharma to Marxist school of historiography.
- Comprehended the contributions of Romila Thapar to Marxist school of historiography.
- Know the Marxist approach of Bipin Chandra.
- Perceive the contribution of Irfan habib to Marxist school of historiography of the Indian National movement.
- Assess the Marxist school of historiography of the Indian National movement.

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### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

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History written on the eve of Indian National movement was deeply rooted in the nationalist school of Indian historiography. Although, this history writers claimed its origin in the theory profounded by Karl Marx, they were not entirely Marxist historians

but they adopted more or less materialistic interpretation as a method of understanding historical phenomenon. Among them some of the historians presumed that the ancient history could be studied within the framework of social sciences. The interpretation of those historians is derived from the historical philosophy of Karl Marx, i.e. dialectical materialism. The essence of this new approach is in the study of the relationship between the social and economic organization and its effect on historical events. This new trend did not insist and emphasis on new evidence for example, re-reading of sources with different sets of questions in mind. This is exemplified in the writing of several economic historians, D.D.Kosambi is one of the eminent historians among them.

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## 2.2 SOME EMINENT MARXIST HISTORIANS

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There are several historians who represented the Marxist school of Indian historiography through their scholastic writings. Some of the eminent Marxist historians are as under:

### 2.2.1 Damodar Dharmanand Kosambi(1907-1966):

He is called the patriarch of the Marxist school of historiography. Although he died prematurely left back a considerable writings as *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History* (1956), *The culture and civilization of Ancient India in Historical outline* (1965), and essays like *Exercises in the Dialectical Methods, Myth and Reality and Studies in the Formation of Indian Culture*. Naturally D.D.Kosambi's writings revolutionized the Marxist school of historiography. He gave a new definition of Indian History as the presentation in chronological order of successive development in the means and relations of production. This definition is based on the development of man from the food-gathering Quasi- animal stage to the food production stage, which definitely raised the man above from a mere animal existence. Gordon Child says that man makes himself by making and using tools and implements in order to live increasingly well at the expense of his environment. It means there is a change in the life whenever the quality and quantity of means of material production changed. Thus, the definition of D.D.Kosambi implies a definite theory of history known as the dialectical materialism or Marxism. D.D.kosambi adopted comparative method and inter disciplinary techniques of investigation to study the dead past. He tried to reconstruct the past with the help of archaeological sources as well as he used his knowledge of Sanskrit and etymological analysis to study the Aryan and non-Aryan elements. There are geographical, topographical and geomorphological pointers, which guided him to indicate some of the urban sites, Buddhist monastic centers in Deccan during the first millennium. This study of cultural survivals which used ethnological and anthropological material is very well

illustrated in his book, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*.

Kosambi says that in order to understand the India's past the transition of society from tribe to caste became helpful. This transition took place from small localized Group-Tribe to a generalized society caste. This transition was the result of the plough agriculture which changed the system of production , disturbed the structure of tribes and made caste the alternative form of social organisation. The earliest transition from tribe to caste took place in the Indus Valley, where the people did not know the use of plough in their agrarian technology. They cultivated their land with the harrow like Nile, Euphrates and Tigris People. Kosambi further says that the Aryans destroyed the Indus Valley agricultueal sustem by breaking the embankments which is mythical referred to in Rig Veda as Indra destroying Vrtra and releasing the waters. Thus, Kosambi emphasized on the interpretation of myths to understand the culture in ancient India.

Kosambi says the economic factors like detribalization or urbanism and technological changes were responsible for the rise of Jainism and Buddhism. The older doctrines could not satisfy social needs of the time the society looked for common new religions, consequently Jainism and Buddhism came into existence. These economic changes brought up land owning peasants known as Grihapatis and wealthy traders known as Shreshtis, the two important classes in the society which signified the rise of the institution of private property. He further says that a large scale cattle sacrifices without payment created cattle deficiency in regular agricultural activities. Hence the new religions out fashioned cattle sacrifice, cattle killing , beef eating and advocated the principle of Ahimsa. This is the economic basis behind the rise of these religions which were supported more by the propertied classes then the rulers. While assessing the work of Kosambi , Romila Thapar says that Kosambi tried to answer the questions that how and why Indian society is and what it is today. Thus, this led to enrich the Marxist school of historiography.

#### **Check your Progress:**

1. discuss the contribution of D.D.Kosambi to the Marxist school of Indian historiography

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### 2.2.2 R.S.Sharma:

Another historian of the Marxist school of Indian historiography was R.S.Sharma who was born in 1920, whose 'Shudders in Ancient India', Indians Feudalism, Urban Decay in India, Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India and Light on Early Indian Society and Economy made him a front rank historian. In order to understand the social relationship in India the inquiry into the caste or the Varna system is essential, which Sharma did in his book Sudras in Ancient India (1958). He says that the use of the irons in agricultural cultivation, transformed the tribal, pastoral and egalitarians pre-class Vedic society into a full-fledged class divided Indian social order. The new order required a large scale labour power which was procured by force it was perpetuated by law and custom and the religion and ideology interwoven it into a social structure called the Varna System. The Dharmashastras ordained the Sudras to serve the higher three Varnas, while Manu reduced them to Slavery and created permanent Politico-legal, socio-economic and religious disabilities. The Sudras skill and the Vaishyas agricultural surplus together provided the material basis for the development of ancient Indian society.

In his book the Indian feudalism(1966) Sharma says that the roots of feudalism were in the land tenure system while its economic content was in the institution of serfdom in which peasants were attached to the soil mostly in the land grants to temples, Brahmins and officials. Sharma further says that urban centers which grew during the period between 200B.C. and 300A.D. declined due to the downslide of Indian trade with China, Roman empire and the end of Kushana Parthian and the Satavahana empires in India itself. In his Material Culture and Social Formation in Ancient India Sharma tells about the transition of the pastoral economy of the Rig Vedic period into the developed economy of the later Vedic period in which largescale agriculture, the use of iron painted grey ware, northern black polished ware, the manufacture of wrought iron, the minting of coins and the wet paddy cultivation took place. The change in material production enhanced Socio-political changes and large surplus in agricultural production which established large rural settlements, growth of trade, use of metallic money, rise of towns and emergence of large territorial states with a regular system of taxation. Thus, Sharma's writing strictly belonged to the Marxist school of Indian historiography.

**Check your Progress:**

2. Examine the writing of R.S.Sharma with reference to Indian feudalism.

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**2.2.3 RomilaThapar:**

She was born in 1930 and became a popular Professor of Ancient Indian History at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi where her valuable contribution led to build and develop the Centre for Historical Studies and Research. There are several books to her credit as *Ashoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* (1963), *History of India*, vol.1 (1966), *Ancient Indian Social History* (1978) and *From Lineage to State* (1984). Romila Thapar, in her book, *Ashoka and the Decline of the Maurya*, says that Ashoka's Dhamma was not the moral effulgence of an idealistic monarch but it was a political and social necessity to solve the problems which he faced as a statesman. His conquest of Kalinga was a strategic and economic necessity which spread the Mauryan empire to various corners. She further says that the breakdown of Mauryan empire took place due to the extremely centralized administration. There was no capable ruler as Ashoka after his death. It could have been prevented even in the absence of ruler of exceptional ability like Ashoka by some kind of national consciousness but it was not in existence during that time.

Romila Thapar's *History of India* vol.1 intended to reach to a much wider audience in refreshing aim and treatment. It introduces the emergent culture, which began with the Indo-Aryans 1500 B.C. to the arrivals of the Europeans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Culture is viewed as rooted in and flowering from the material life of the people in which the economic, religious, artistic and literacy aspects are inextricably entwined within a framework of political history. The book is a scholarly compression of agriculture industry, rural, urban life, trade, maritime activities and a systematic study of Indian society. In her *Ancient Indian Social History*, she had thirteen essays together, in the first essay she studied comparatively Hindu and Buddhist socio-religious systems. The Hindu tradition was monarchical and authoritative in politics and government, discriminatory in law, caste-ridden and inequalitarian in social relations and inimical to human freedom and individual liberty. While Buddhist and Jain tradition emphasized the equality of human beings, equality before the law, disapproved of slavery,

encouraged higher status for women and placed greater value on empirical thinking and education than the formalism of the Brahmanical system.

In her Presidential Address to the Ancient History Section of the Indian History Congress at Varanasi in 1969, she pointed out that the archaeological evidence does suggest a massive Aryan invasion or migration, the origin of caste is not to be seen as a result of the subjugation of Darvins, that should have been present in the Harappan Culture and the inclusion of some practices and beliefs in the Later Vedic religion, the Vedic literature can not be purely Aryan composition only. While discussing from Lineage to State, Thapar says that the State formation took place due to the use of iron, the plough agriculture, the rise of peasant proprietors, use of agricultural surplus into trade and commerce, rise of rice merchants, emergence of market towns, urbanization, use of coined money, banking and trade. This new society required a new organization to protect and promote its interest. Thus states like Kosal and Magadha came into existence.

In her *Interpreting Early India*, which published in 1992, Romila Thapar questioned the theory of Aryan race and the notion of Oriental Despotism, the two main ideological trends in modern interpretation of early Indian history. She questioned the Aryan theory in the light of the evidence of archaeology, linguistic and social anthropology. In the same way Thapar questioned the notion of Oriental Despotism which is based on the unchanging nature of India's past static society, absence of private property in land, state monopoly on the irrigation system, absence of urban center and effective network of trade, self-sufficient villages at the base and the despotic king at the apex. Against this argument Thapar points out that the Dharmasutras and the Arthashastra list the laws and regulations for sale, bequest, inheritance of land and other forms of private property and many inscriptions after 500 A.D. give precise information relating to private property in land. Archaeological evidence of existence of urban centres during and after Harappan period and the urban society mentioned in the Pali texts like *Kamasutra* refute the notion of Oriental Despotism. Thus, Thapar's argument is also supported by urban life, trade and commerce, use of coins and promissory notes-existed in ancient India.

### **Check your Progress:**

3. Assess the contribution of Romila Thapar to the Marxist school of Indian historiography.

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#### 2.2.4 Bipan Chandra:

He is one more prominent historian of the Marxist school of historiography, who has written several books on Indian history. Among them the Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism, Nationalism and Colonialism in India, India Struggle for Independence and Communalism in Modern India are well known and standard books written on modern India. Bipan Chandra in his Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism, examined the economic policies of the Indian national movement before it spread to the various parts of the country. He adopted a realistic conception of history and treated ideas secondary to economic forces because these economic forces are the direct agents of historical evolution whereas the ideas form the social relation which are crucial for social and political actions. This led him to not down the speeches and writings of nationalist leaders, legislative bodies, newspapers and journals voicing nationalist opposition to the British economic imperialism. In his Nationalism and Colonialisation in India, Bipan Chandra says that Indian capitalist developed after 1857 had developed no link with European capitalist because it was a capitalism of colonially subordinated and structured economy.

Bipan Chandra in his India's Struggle for Independence differed from the imperialist approach of the Cambridge school and the Indian nationalist school and argued that the Indian national movement was not a people's movement but a product of the need of the time and interest of the educated class. He further mentions that Marxist historians call the Indian national movement as a structured bourgeois movement. In his communalism in modern India, Bipan Chandra denied that the communalism was a mere historical accident or product of dialectical conspiracy and says that it was one of the by products of colonialism. Communalism is often distorted and misrepresented as social tension and class conflict but it is an extreme form of reaction to be fought on all fronts. While analyzing communalism, he says that it remained liberal from 1857-1937, it became fascist after 1937 based on the politics of hatred, fear psychosis and irrationality after the world war II, the British played the communal card and recognized the Muslim League as the sole advocate of the Muslim cause.

#### Check your Progress:

4. What are the writings of Bipan Chandra? Why is he called a Marxist historian?

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### 2.2.5 Irfan Habib:

He is a well known Indian historian of Mughal history. Although, he has written several books and contributed to Marxist school of historiography, his *Interpreting Indian History*, *Caste and Money in Indian History*, *Problems of Marxist Historiography*, *Agrarian System of Mughal India*, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire* and the *Cambridge Economic History of India* are more popular and very widely read books.

Irfan Habib in his *Interpreting Indian History* emphasized on the interpretation and not narration of history. He says that interpretation of past is necessary because the facts on which historians treat the evidence of the past cannot recreate and verify those events. The evidence for the past is little and keeps wide blanks. These blanks could be filled up by understanding how societies operate and what people are motivated by and capable of doing various things in various situations. Thus the interpretation with the help of personal judgment and erudition of the historian helps to understand the history in a better way. In the same work he says that the medieval Indian economy was a separate social formation different from the feudal economy on the basis of labor process, extraction of surplus value and the distribution of surplus production. Irfan Habib in his another work *Caste and Money in Indian History*, says that caste was the most rigid form of division of labor, formed the part and the relations with production. The chief beneficiaries of this rigorous form of class exploitation were the ruling classes of the nobility and zamindars in the medieval Indian society.

Irfan Habib in another work *Problems of Marxist Historiography* led him to conclude that Marx's followers insisted on a rigid universal periodisation into Primitive communism, Slavery and Feudalism and as a Classification of all societies according to that pattern which is not consistent with the philosophy of Marx. In his book *Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Irfan Habib says about the social formation based on economy in which higher tax collection of land was there that led to the presenting to rise in rebellion against revenue appropriating ruling class, that was the zamindars. The Mughals failed to extend any succour or relief to peasantry, which wrought political havoc led to foreign conquest and the ruling dynasty proved itself responsible for its own distraction. Irfan Habib concludes that not the religious policy of Aurangzeb but the economic tyranny of the Zamindar was the reason of opposition to Aurangzeb.

Irfan Habib has contributed much more to the Mughal history than any other historian through his *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, in which thirty two pages of maps and sixty six pages of detailed notes are there. His *The Economic Map of India* is the cartographic

depiction of The Geography and Economy of the Indus Valley civilization and the Mauryan Empire. Irfan Habib contributed to and co-edited the Cambridge Economic History of India with Tapan Chaudhari in which he discussed about the agrarian economy, its production, agrarian taxes, rural classes and population during the of period Mughals. Finally it is surmised that Irfan Habib's writings centered on the understanding of common, the peasant in its village settings.

### **Check your Progress:**

5. Discuss about the writings of Irfan Habib with special reference to his Caste and Money in India.

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## **2.3 ASSESSMENT OF THE MARXIST SCHOOL OF INDIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY**

D.D.kosambi the well known Marxist historian of India, reconstructed the early Indian history on the basis of the theory and method profounded by Karl Marx and Engels. The method developed by Kosambi being used increasingly in Indian historiography brought out a major change as revolution. The Marxist school of Indian historiography adopted analysis and explanation of economic production and social classes as the basic principles in reconstruction of Indian history. This brought out several outstanding features of the Marxist school of Indian historiography some of them are mentioned as under:

### **2.3.1 Broadening the Scope of History:**

The major shift and broadening of the scope of history is evident from the works of R.S. Sharma's Sudras in Ancient India and Irfan Habib's. The Agrarian System of Mughal India. They out fashioned the dynastic and political history and developed a new paradigm which limited the political history to a framework or background for economic and social history. They emphasized on society then the state on people then the statesmen and on human life then the political life and made the large sections of people the legitimate objects of historical inquiry which was unnoticed so far. The idealist and romantic treatment to the past entranced the search for economic and social factors of human life the objective forces of material production which affected the social relations. The emphasis on individual achievements is disappearing from history, which symbolized the broadening in the value judgment.

### **2.3.2 Interdisciplinary Methods:**

The Marxist school of Indian historiography tried to use primary sources to reconstruct the ancient Indian history. In order to understand these sources Marxist historians needed help of the linguist, sociologist, anthropologist and statistician and used the data of these disciplines wherever possible to reconstruct the history of the past on the basis of material production. The Marxist historians considered archaeological sources completely free from the bias and constitute tangible and more accurate evidence for reconstruction of history of the past. These historians used archaeological sources to understand the urbanization as centre of production and circulation of wealth during the later vedic period and reconstructed its history, Thus, Marxist historians undertook interdisciplinary method in the reconstruction of Indian historiography.

### **2.4.3 Accounts of origin:**

The Marxist school of Indian historiography is strong enough to present historical accounts in origin with their accurate explanation and interpretation. For Example, Kosambi's accounts of state formation in the Ganga Valley and Irfan Habib's origin and development of caste. Romila Thapar advised to the historians that they should take help of social anthropology to find out source for satisfactory explanation of several institutions of Hinduism because no institution came into society without any legacy.

### **2.3.4 Historians Freedom of Interpretation of History:**

The Marxist school of Indian historiography made conscious efforts to bring about change in history writing from narrative and descriptive to explanatory and interpretative. In this process of change these historians emphasized more on large movements and not on events to prove that interpretation of fact is history and not the mere description of events. This is proved by Irfan Habib's *Interoperating History* and considered it as the theoretical defiance of historians freedom of interpretation. As a matter of fact in the interpretations of history some sort of ideology form relation and take a leading role in it.

### **2.3.5 Critique of western understanding of Indian Past:**

The Marxist school of Indian historiography along with nationalist school challenged certain axiomatic concepts of the British imperialist and other European understanding of historians past. D.D.kosambi did not accept the concept of Asiatic mode of production is applicable to Indian history and proved that there were extensive urban centers and brisk commercial activity from sixth century B.C. to the period of the Gupta. The Marxist school of Indian historiography made it clear that there was a social mobility in order to get various occupational reasons in ancient India. Romila Thapar criticized the theory of the Aryan race and the

concept of oriental despotism. Thus, these historians opposed to the European understanding of ancient Indian history.

### **2.3.6 Difference in conclusions :**

The historians of Marxist school of Indian historiography differed with each other in the conclusion on the identical mode of production and gradual changes in it. Kosambi concluded that the Indus Valley Civilization did not know the use of plough and the banks of river valley were cultivated with the help of harrow. On the otherhand , Romila Thapar argued on the basis of recent evidence that the pre-Aryan even pre-Harappan people knew the plough agriculture and they practiced it regularly as well as the Vedic literature suggest that the word plough is of non-Aryan origin. As a matter of fact the raising dykes and embankment to collect flood waters of big rivers and supply to produce agricultural surpluses to feed the entire urban population could be the operation of more developed and sophisticated technology than the surface scratching harrow. In the same way Prof. Sharma and Prof. Thapar differ each other on the attitude of Buddhism to the system of slavery Prof. Sharma says that Buddhism was well aware about the social order in the sixth century B.C. and favoured the money lending for trade and slave keeping to enhance agricultural production. On the other hand Romila Thapar did not agree with Prof. Sharma and argued that Buddhism did not approve the system of slavery, which considered it as antihuman. Thus, the conclusion or guesses of the Marxist historians differed one to another.

### **2.3.7 Economic Interpretation of the Principle of Ahimsa:**

The historians of the Marxist school of Indian historiography upheld the principle of ahimsa enjoined by Buddhism and Jainism the two popular religions originated in the sixth century B.C. and interpreted that there was one of the economic reasons behind this principle. D.D.Kosambi on the evidence of Pali stories of royal fire sacrifices says that as the Vedic rituals prescription large scale cattle were slaughtered, which resulted in incredible scarcity of cattle on the new iron-plough agriculture in the Ganga basin. As a matter of fact this iron-plough agriculture needed preservation of and augmentation of cattle wealth to produce agricultural surpluses to feed the urban population. Kosambi further says that in order to avoid the strain on regular agriculture created by requisition of increasing number of animals free of cost for Yadnya, the Jainism and Buddhism out fashioned the practice of animal sacrifice , cattle killing and beef- eating by tabooing it in the sixth century B.C.



### Check your Progress

6. Explain in brief the Marxist school of Indian historiography

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## 2.4 SUMMARY

The history writing on the Indian national movement was deeply rooted in the nationalist school of Indian historiography. Although, the history writers of this school claimed its origin in the theory profounded by Karl Marx, they were not entirely Marxist historians but they adopted more or less materialistic interpretation as a method for understanding historical phenomena. Some of the historians presumed that the ancient history could be studied within the frame work of social sciences. The interpretation of these historians is derived from the historical philosophy of Karl Marx, that is dialectical materialism. The essence of this new approach is in the study of the relationship between the social and economic organization and its effects on historical events.

There were several eminent historians of this school of Indian historiography some of important Marxist historians are mentioned as under. Among all Marxist historian D.D.Kosambi came to be known as patriarch of this school, who left a huge historical writings. Among his popular work An Introduction to the Study of Indian History which he published in 1956. The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline, which was published in 1965, and essay like Exercises in the Dialectical Methods, Myth and Reality and Studies in the Formation of Indian culture. Naturally he brought a revolution in the Marxist school of Indian historiography. He gave a new definition of history as, the presentation in chronological order of successive development in the means and relations of production. It means, there is a change in the life whenever the quality and quantity of means of material production changed. Thus, the definition of D.D.Kosambi implies a definite theory of history known as the dialectical materialism or Marxism.

R.S.Sharma was next in the rank to Kosambi in the Marxist school of Indian historiography. His writings as Sudras in Ancient India, Indian Feudalism, Urban Decay in India, Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India and Light on Early Indian society and economy made him a front rank Marxist Indian

historian. In order to understand the social relationship he made inquiries into caste or Vernas in ancient India. He says that the use of iron in agricultural cultivation transformed the tribal, pastoral and egalitarian pre-class Vedic society into a full-fledged class divided Indian social order. In his book the Indian Feudalism, Sharma says that the roots of feudalism were in the land tenure system, while its economic content was in the institution of serfdom, in which peasants were attached to the soil, mostly in the land grant to temples, Brahmins and officials.

Romila Thapar another Marxist historian was a popular professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru university Delhi and developed the Center for Historical Studies and Research. The historian has several books to her credit as Ashoka and the Decline of the Mauryas, which was published in 1963, History of India, published in 1966, Ancient Indian Social History (1978) and from Lineage to State, published in 1984. Romila Thapar in her first book says that Ashoka's Dhamma was not only the moral effulgence but it was a political and social necessity to solve the problems faced by a statesman. In her interpreting early India, Thapar questioned the theory of Aryans race and the notion, Oriental Despotism.

Bipan Chandra another historian of Marxist school of Indian historiography wrote the Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism, Nationalism and Colonialism in India, India's Struggle for Independence and Communism in Modern India. Bipan Chandra in his first book examined the economic policies of the Indian national movement before it spread to various parts of the country. In his India's Struggle for Independence, Bipan Chandra differed from the imperialist approach of the Cambridge school and argued that the Indian national movement was not mass movement but a product of the need of the time and the interest of the educated class. As well as communism in India was one of the by products of colonialism.

Irfan Habib a well known Marxist historian of India has written Interpreting Indian History, Caste and Money in Indian History, Problems of Marxist Historiography, Agrarian system of Mughal India, an Atlas of the Mughal Empire and the Cambridge Economic History of India. Irfan Habib in his Interpreting Indian History, emphasized on interpretation more than narrations because he says that history is better understood by interpretation and not by narration. He also stressed on the system of feudalism in India and problems of Marxist historiography. While assessing the Marxist school of Indian historiography, there came up several new and supportive points as it broadened the scope of history, these historians adopted interdisciplinary methods to interpret and express their views about this school. They presented original accounts in the interpretation and they took much freedom in

interpreting for Indian history. The historians of this school criticized the western understanding of India past and came to different conclusions as well as they offered economic interpretation of the principle of ahimsa, which was advocated by Jainism and Buddhism the two popular religions of the sixth century B.C. India.

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## 2.5 . QUESTIONS

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1. Explain in brief the Marxist school of Indian historiography? What are its general features?
2. Discuss the contribution of D.D.Kosambi and R.S.Sharma to the Marxist school of Indian historiography?
3. Assess the Marxist writing of Romila Thapar and Bipan Chandra. Bring out its significance.
4. Make an assessment of Marxist school of Indian historiography.
5. Evaluate the role of Irfan Habib as Marxist historian in the Indian historiography.

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## 2.6. ADDITIONAL READINGS

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1. D.D.Kosambi introduction to the study of ancient Indian history.
2. R.s.Sharma, Sudras in ancient India.
3. Romila Thapar , ancient Indian social history.
4. Bipan Chandra, India's struggle for independence.



## **HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT (A3) Subaltern School**

### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Nature of Subaltern Historiography

3.3 Important Historians and their Subaltern : Historiography

3.4 Summary

3.5 Questions.

3.6 Additional Readings.

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### **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the historical prospective of the subaltern school.
- Explain it as the historiography of the protest.
- Understand the nature of the Subaltern Historiography
- Perceive the growth of Subaltern school of Indian Historiography
- Explain the important Subaltern historians and their Historiography
- Grasp the contribution of major Subaltern historians to Subaltern school of Indian Historiography.

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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According to Irfan Habib , there are several new trends in historiography, such as Namierism, French New History, Subalternity and Post modernism , which he says that he often finds their terminology and theology difficult to understand. He further says that he neither denies the insights one can gain from some or all of these, nor he thinks that the Marxist approach necessarily excludes them or can not gain in knowledge or method by their study. He argues that there is a difference between their

practitioners who ask different questions and do not share the same vision for humanity. Naturally subalternity is a new and different trend which was neglected by the historiography so far. But Ranjit Gupta developed it in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, made it the most popular approach of history and converted it into a Subaltern school of Historiography.

The Subaltern the title is taken from Antonio Grimace's manuscript writings, which means of inferior rank whether of class, caste, age, gender or office. The subaltern studies cover the collections of monographs on various issues, diverse and unconnected topics of human kind. Their theme is one that is insurgency of the lower classes against injustice. The Subaltern studies bring to light the lower sections of the Indian people which the historiography had neglected so far. They address to a range of topics extending in time from the Mughal period to the 1970's in theme from communalism to industrial labour and in manner from the descriptive to the conceptual topics.

The Subaltern studies came into existence in the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which brought into practice a new approach of writing history on modern India. Ranjit Guha, the protagonist of the Subaltern studies says that the historiography of Indian national movements was biased and prejudiced with elitism and no contribution of subaltern or lower classes considered in sharing the views that developed the national consciousness and in making the Indian nation. These two fold processes were treated as the elite achievements. The first approach came to be known as the colonial or the British imperialist historiography based on a narrow behaviourist approach, looks upon Indian nationalism as there response of the Indian bourgeois elite to the stimulus provided by British ideas , institutes, opportunities and resources. The second approach popularly came to be known as the Indian nationalist historiography, which primarily presented that the Indian nationalism was an idealist venture in which the indigenous elite led the Indian people from the subjugation to the freedom. Ranjit Guha says that neither of these two views explained Indian nationalism completely because neither acknowledged the contribution of people made on their own or they did it independently of the elite to the making and development of Indian nationalism.

Ranjit Guha further says that the elastic historiography never explained the popular initiatives asserting them as the anti-Rowlett upsurge of 1919 or the quit India movements of 1942. He says that there was a domain of people is politics which was parallel to elite politics in that domain the principle actors were the subaltern classes and groups, which constituted the mass of the population. The elitist historiography never recognized this fact , therefore, it should be resolutely for and developed an alternative

discourse which should be based on the recognition of the Subaltern domains of politics. This many other factors led to the rise and development of the subaltern school of historiography.

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### **3.2 NATURE OF SUBALTERN HISTORIOGRAPHY**

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The Subaltern study is labour oriented, it has Marxian tone, premise and analysis. The main object of the Subaltern study is to bring to light the woes and accumulated grievances of peasants, factory workers tribal and lower classes and leading them in rebellions against their constituted authority. The lower classes used revolt as their means and method to attract the attention of the elite in order to get improved their conditions and force them to act to actuate the reforms during the colonial period but no concrete gains the lower classes or Subaltern could get so far. Ranjit Guha says that peasants never drifted into rebellion easily but they consciously rebelled when they came to realize that their all efforts of various kinds and pleadings failed entirely without any concrete results. The workers in factory, villagers of the plains and the Adivasis of the uplands deliberately undertook insurgency as a desperate way-out of an intolerable conditions of existence which were created by wicked landlords, extortionate usurers, dishonest traders venal police, irresponsible officials and partisan processes of law. Naturally, the revolts of these people and their impact on Indian nationalism constituted the major themes for historians, which came to be known as subaltern studies. The subaltern consciousness their religion, superstition, communalism and the subject classes of the elites formed the staple object of the studies of the subaltern school of historiography.

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### **3.3 IMPORTANT HISTORIANS AND THEIR SUBALTERN : HISTORIOGRAPHY**

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There are several historians who have written on the theme of subaltern which came to be known as subaltern historiography. Some of the important historians and their titles are as under:

#### **3.3.1 Ramchandra Guha:**

He is the most important historian of the subaltern school of historiography. His popular essay known as 'Forestry and social Protest in British Kumaun' is on the period between 1893 and 1921. It shows that the Chipko Andolan movement started from 1973 in Kumaun was against the commercial exploitation of forest, has a history which began from the nineties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and lasted into the 20's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The reservation of the Kumaun forests by the British government led the traditionally simple and law abiding hill men to undertake violent and sustained opposition against the government which culminated in the revolt of 1921. This

revolt lasted for several months and paralyzed the whole administration. These hillmen also went on strike against the government policy of statutory and compulsory labour. Ramchandra Guha further brought to the light the pine forests of the Himalayan ranges which gutted by incendiary fires. Although, this incident created several damages to tribes attracted no attention of any other either imperialist or nationalist historians. This is one of the best examples of subaltern historiography.

### 3.3.2 Darshan Perusek:

He is another subaltern historian, who tells a story of his great grand father. Baba Karaak Singh after reading the first essay, published in 1982. The essay was written by a group of post independent historians of Subaltern Studies on South Asian History and Society under the general editorship of Ranjit Guha, Australian National University Canberra. Ranjit Guha, in his first essay says that the historiography of Indian nationalism had been dominated by elitism colonialist elitism and bourgeois nationalist elitism. He further says that elitism which projected the making of Indian nation was predominantly the achievement of the ruling class ideas, institutions and personalities. That elitism excluded the politics of the people or what ever they presented, it was marginalized considerably in their narratives. The politics of the people was autonomous and parallel to the domain of elite policies through out the colonial period. This was the politics in which the principle actors were neither the dominant groups of the indigenous society nor the colonial authorities but the subaltern classes and groups only. These subaltern classes and groups constituted the mass of the labouring population and the intermediate strata in towns and country sides.

This reality led Darshan Perusek to write about the story of Baba karaak, the great grand father of his own. He says that Baba Karaak Singh was awarded a jagir by the British for his loyalty towards the British during the Uprising of 1857. Baba Karaak was one of the mutinous sepoys, he used to give detail secret military plans of the rebel employees to the British officer in charge. Darshan Perusek says that the name of his grand father never appeared in any officials roll-call of either heroes or villains or in pre-independent or post-independent history. Baba Karaak Singh was considered too minor or very insignificant to attract the attention of historian to refer to his activities anywhere. But his name was remembered by his children and their children for the jagir he left for them, his children used the land to grow sugar cane and enjoy it in the name of Baba Karaak Singh, they considered the event note worthy as well. It means history of common people was not written. Thus, it is to be written in the interest of common man or subaltern groups. Ranjit Guha says that the imperialist historians have considered the structure of power which they

obtained within a given social formation while writing history. It means they were subjective in defining the historical material as historical records, reports and census data which is used for writing history. They were not interested in writing history in the subaltern point of view. Guha says that without equivocation the dominant groups received consideration which they did not deserve. These groups endowed primacy which was assigned to them by the long standing tradition of elitism in the society. Edward Said observed in his foreword to *Selected subaltern Studies* that the subaltern historians has no history of ideas, no calmly Olympian narrative of events, no disengaged objective recital of facts. It is rather sharply contestary an attempt to wrest control of the Indian past from its scribes and curators in the present. In short, history was biased, there was no objective history. The explicitly combative stance of the subaltern historians was promise of good history a serious effort of corrective history in the point of view of subaltern groups.

### **3.3.3 David Arnold:**

He is an another subaltern historian. He studied the conditions of hillmen in the hill tracts of Guden and Rampa of Andra Pradesh between 1839 and 1924 and wrote stories on their long series of disturbances and rebellions against the British. He also studied the Madras famine of 1876-78 and brought to light the peasant consciousness and peasant action for their subsistence and survival. David Arnold complains that the literature written on Indian famine does not consider that phenomenon in terms of human experience. In the same way the peasant experience of death and famine has been subordinated to the description of state policy and relief administration. It never attracted the attention of historians.

### **3.3.4 Gyan Pandey:**

Brings to light the peasant revolt of Awadh during the period between 1919-1922 and shows how it created much more impact on Indian nationalism. In the same way Stephen Hemmingham presented the picture of the Quit India movement of 1942 in Bihar and Eastern UP that how it was a dual revolt which consisted and combined the nationalist elite uprising with that of subaltern rebellion. Although, this was a presentation of very broad and wider scenario of the society, this quit India revolt did not receive the required scholarly treatment from the elite historians. Hemmingham says that the historians who work within the borders of elite historiography could not digest the substance of 1942 revolt. Therefore the writings of Gyan Pandey on the peasant revolt of Awadh between 1919-1922 known as the subaltern historiography.



### 3.3.5 Arvind Das:

Another subaltern historian tries to prove that the agrarian changes in Bihar brought in the form of land reforms were not the elite sponsored event. He says that the land reforms in Bihar between 1947-1978 were the direct combined result of the agitation started by Swami Sahajanand as well as the movement started by the powerful Kansan Sabha. The discontent among the peasant in Bihar was supported by the militant communist led peasant movement in Telengana of Andhra State. Das further says that any interpretation of agrarian change as an elite sponsored land reform is like chasing the shadow without trying to understand reality.

### 3.3.6 N.K.Chandra:

Is one of the important historians of the subaltern historiography. He studied all the conditions of the agricultural workers in Burdwan and brought to the light the appallingly poor conditions of the masses in and around Burdwan. He presented the detailed account of the existing poor wages and earning of agricultural labourers and the poor peasants in that area. He showed the existing problems of poverty and unemployment among the people of Burdwan and attracted the attention of people towards them.

### 3.3.7 Dipesh Chakrabarty:

Is a good observer of the conditions of the jute mill workers between 1840 – 1940 as their salary, working hours, holidays, working situation and financial implications were not just. In the same way he also studied their conditions between the years 1920-1950 and wrote two separate essays, in which he tried to point out that how the elite attitude converted into socialist and communist ranks. He also explained how the leader of jute mill workers treated unions as their zamindari and how they degenerated their contact with the workers into the hierarchical terms and developed the babu coolie relationship. Thus, the essay of Dipesh Chakrabarty treated as the writings into the point of subaltern studies.

### 3.3.8 Tanika Sarkar:

Another historian of the Subaltern School, studied the tribal movement in the north western Bengal between 1824-1932. Tribal leader, Jitu Santhal began this movement in Malda area of Bengal, which was against the landlords, who used to exploit the tribal as their tenants. The movement began when the exploitation became exorbitant and unbearable. It took the shape of tenant agitation against the landlord and continued till 1932 when some of the tribals were shot dead. Although, this was the good theme of the subaltern historiography it was taken over by the Swarajist agitators from outside. Thus the Swarajist agitation kept away the leadership of tribal leader Jitu Santhal with whom broadalok and Ambrita Bazar Patrika were sympathetic.

### 3.3.9 Gautam Bhadra:

As per Gramsci multiple elements of conscious leadership, Gautam Bhadra has written four essays on the rebel character of Shah Mal, Devi Singh, Gonoo and Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah. They were the rebels of the revolt 1857 but no historian tried to write right or wrong on them. They were totally left out of the historical writings and literature of the Great Uprising of 1857. These people who rebelled against the British were treated minor and ordinary rebels by the historians. Gautam Bhadra, therefore wrote on them which came to be known as the subaltern historiography. S.B. Chaudhary who wrote on the Uprising of 1857 and called it as the nationalist event where as Promod Sengupta and Datta termed it as one of the radical communist events.

### 3.3.10 Shahid Amin:

One more subaltern historian of the Indian historiography has written on Gandhi regarding his influence on the peasant, which created consciousness among them. He says that the important element in the Charisma that created consciousness was belief of peasants in the superstition and miracles. In the same way, David Hardiman's essay on the Devi reformist movement among the tribals of South Gujarat affords insights into tribal consciousness and attracted the attention of various sociologists.

### 3.3.11 Sumit Sarkar:

Gives detail account of the non-cooperation Khilafat movement of 1921-1922. He mentions in his essay that the movement was much more popular than the anti-partition agitation of 1905. The anti-partition movement was confined only to the Hindu upper class. The Non-cooperation movement was a popular initiative, which eventually alarmed the British government but forced the leaders to withdraw it to avoid further loss of lives and properties.

### Check your Progress

3. Discuss briefly the historical perspective of the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography.
4. Explain the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography as the historiography of protest.

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### 3.4 SUMMARY

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The title the Subaltern is taken from Antonio Gramsci's writing which means of the inferior rank, whether of class, caste, age, gender or office. The Subaltern studies cover the collection of monographs on various issues, diverse and unconnected topics of human kind. The insurgency of the lower classes against the injustice is one of the most important themes of the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography. It brings to light the lower classes of the society, which were totally neglected by the Indian Historiography so far. It addresses to a range of topics extending in time from the Mughal period to the 1970's in themes from communalism to industrial labour and in manner from the descriptive to the conceptual topics.

Ranjit Guha, the protagonist of the Subaltern Historiography says that this is a new approach and popularly came to be known as the historiography of protest. Because the historiography of Indian national movement never considered the contributions of the lower classes in sharing the views and led to the development of Indian national consciousness.

The Subaltern study is labour oriented. It has adopted the marxian tone, its premise and analysis is also based on Marxist philosophy. The main object of this study is to bring to light the woes and accumulated grievances of peasants, factory workers, tribal and leading them in rebellion against their constituted authority. The revolt of these people and its impact on Indian nationalism constituted the major themes for historian, which came to be known as the Subaltern studies.

There are several historians who have written on the above subjects. Some of them more important Subaltern historians are as Ranjit Guha, Ramchandra Guha, Darshan Peruse, David Arnold, Gyan Pandey, Arvind Das, N.K.Chandra, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Tanika Sarkar, Gautam Bhadra, Shahid Amin, Sumit Sarkar, Hardiman David, Hobsbawm E.J., Kumar Kapli, and several others.

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### 3.5 QUESTIONS

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1. Give a brief account of the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography.
2. Why is called the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography as the historiography of protest? Substantiate your answer with examples.

3. Examine the nature and growth of the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography.
4. Assess the contribution of major historians to the Subaltern school of Indian Historiography.
5. Assess the contribution of Sir John Seeley to the Cambridge School of historiography.
6. Examine the contribution of Lord Acton and John Bag Nell Bury to the Cambridge school of historiography.

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### **3.6 ADDITIONAL READING**

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1. J.R.Hale(ed): The evolution of British Historiography.
2. J.W.Thomson and H.J.Holm: History of historical Writing.
3. G.P.Gooch: History and historians in he Nineteenth century.
4. H.E.Barnes: History of historical writings.
5. Sen S.P( ed ) historians and historiographies in modern India.
6. Sharma Ramesh Chandra(ed), historiographies and historians since independence.
7. Thomson J.Wand Bernold Holm. A history of historical writing.
- 8.. Majumdar , R.C.(ed), historiography in modern India.



## HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT B) The Cambridge School

### UNIT STRUCTURE

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Some Eminent Historians of this school.
- 4.6 Summary.
- 4.7 Questions.

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### 4.0 OBJECTIVES

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the Cambridge School of Historiography
- Know the evolution of the Cambridge School of Historiography
- Explain the contribution of Sir John Seeley to Cambridge School of Historiography.
- Grasp the role of LORD Acton in the Cambridge School of Historiography
- Comprehend the contribution of John Bagel Burny to the Cambridge School of Historiography.

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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J.M.Thomson says that there is a fashion to speak about the Oxford School and the Cambridge School but as a matter of fact England never developed any school of historians. If any school is there it is the Cambridge School of Historiography. Which is the self styled school of historiography. The Cambridge School tried to emphasis on the need for more scientific and objective history, which actually began with initiative of Sir John Seeley. As the universities in Germany and France took lead in the development of their historiographies, but that did not take place in England for along time because no universities in England began to teach history till the nineteenth century. Although, Ancient History was

taught there, it was under the agencies of literature. There was no separate department of history and the post of Professor of history till 1869. Sir John Seeley after his appointment as professor of history, tried to make it secular, non-partisan, instructive and philosophical. History as a secular study should treat men as permanent residents of this world and not as passengers traveling to the next world. History should not be a tool in the hands of political parties. It should project that man is happy when he is free and spiritually independent. It should contain some parts of philosophy and criticism, social and economic facts ideas and movements so that history should become interesting. It should also be instructive by blending the lights of philosophy with the appropriate beauties of historical composition. Thus, the scope of history is enlarged and dignified.

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## **4.2 SOME EMINENT HISTORIANS OF THIS SCHOOL**

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There are several eminent British historians, who contributed a lot to Cambridge School of Historiography, some of them are as under:

### **4.2.1 Sir John Seeley(1834-1895):**

According to Barnes, Prof. Seeley was a popular nationalist and imperialist historians and was responsible for political historiography of England. He was also responsible to develop distinctively, the Cambridge School of Historiography. Sir John Seeley succeeded Kingsley as regius Professor of Modern History at the university of Cambridge. Before this assignment he had worked as a Professor of Latin at the University college London and came to limelight with *Ecce Homo*. PROF. Seeley has several books to his credit as 1. *Life and Times of Stein*, 2. *The expansion of England*, 3. *The Growth of British Policy*, 4. *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*. Prof. Seeley emphasized on the teaching of the modern history on the basis of its importance and continuity and started teaching the same at the university. He considered history as a school of statesmanship and says that a politician without knowledge of history, can not take a rational interest in politics and he can not come to a rational judgment about all matters related to administration and he proved this in his historical works cited above. In his first work *Life and times of Stein*, Prof. Seeley showed that how Prussia was transformed into a modern state by Stein. He formed high regards for Stein for his reforms in Prussia making Prussia strong to take initiative in the struggle for independence and succeeding in it as a statesman, administrator and diplomat.

Prof. Seeley in his second book, *The Expansion of England*, dealt with the imperialistic policies, principles of England in various continents and defeating other competing European powers

specially the eighteenth century France. Therefore this book was considered as one of the text books of imperialism. He never favoured imperialism in his career but intellectual and moral greatness. He considered bigness necessarily greatness. He prepared to sacrifice material magnitude for moral and intellectual magnitude. In his third book, *The Growth of British Policy*, Prof. Sleely projected growth of British power in various continent and termed it as a great power in the world . he also highlighted the influence of various forces as religious and dynastic conflicts of Europe on the politics of England. In his short history of Napoleon Bonaparte for encyclopedia Britannica , he traced the commercial rivalry between England and France in India and referred to the continental policy of Napoleon Bonaparte.

#### **4.2.2 Lord Acton(1834-1902):**

Prof. Acton the real founder of the Cambridge School of Modern History , was born at Naples and was the son of an English baronet and a German mother. He did his school at Paris and then went to the Roman Cathelic college at Oscott and Edinburg. He went to Dollinger college at Munich to study the Church history at the age of fourteen. He attended several lectures of Ranke, one of the popular protagonists of the Positivist Historiography at Berlin. He went on tour of other european countries like Italy and Russia between 1855 and 1858. He also visited America during the same period.

Lord Acton succeeded professor Sir John seemly as Regins Professor of Modern History at the university in 1895, who was treated much greater historian than Seeley. Although he did not write history extensively he did much more for the cause of modern history than any other man in the discipline. Among the historical works of lord Acton, his *Quarterly Home and Foreign Review*, his article, *German school for History*, his outlines of the Cambridge Modern History and his Edition of *Comprehensive History of Modern world* are well known. The quarterly which is started and became one of the owners in 1858, aimed to support the cause of religion by the discovery of truth, where as his first article *German school for History* purported to contribute to the *English Historical Review* in 1886. Act on published his lectures on Modern History, which he delivered as Professor of Modern History at the university of Cambridge. John Pollock on of his students says that Lord Acton had a magnetic quality in his tone and enthralled the audience as he uttered each and every sentence with measured deliberation. While delivering lectures on modern history he traced the development of the world from the renaissance to the eve of the French Revolution, emphasized on liberty and declared that the main content of modern history was the emancipation of conscience of man from the authority. He was very happy to accept the invitation of editing the comprehensive history of modern world.

Although he outlined brilliantly to the Cambridge Modern History he could not contribute to it much more due to his ultimately death.

Lord Acton's another contribution to history is that of his lectures on the French Revolution in which he declared that the events in the Revolution were the result of the combination of the French theory and American practice. He held the king his advisors and the Queen responsible for the Revolution. He supported the declaration of rights and said that the doctrine of human obligation is not assignable to contract or interest or to force. Although, this declaration was stronger and mightier than any thing in the world it had defects of sacrificing liberty to equality and succeeding absolutism of the peoples representatives to the absolutism of king. In a nutshell , Lord Acton was a combination of literacy historian , scholarship of the Rankean school, the scientific spirit of Bury and many other virtues which bridged the outgoing and incoming schools of historiography.

#### **4.2.3 John Bagnell Bury(1861-1927):**

Another popular and scholarly historian of Cambridge School of Historiography was John Bagnell Bury. According to Prof. Gooch, due to Bury's erudite narratives and his edition of Gibbon gave him a place in the front rank of scholarly historians. Such important historian Bury was the son of a clergy man in England. He was well versed in Greek grammar and was introduced to classics at the age of ten. He studied at various colleges as Foyle college, London, Trinity college, Dublin and at Gottingen, where he studied Sanskrit.

John Bury was a very hardworking scholar naturally he had several books to his credit as 1. A History of the Later Roman Empire, from Arcadins to Irene, 395-800A.D., 2. A History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil I -802-867 A.D., which is the continuation of the first book . 3. Freedom of Thought, which is philosophical and projects him as an optimistic human personality. 4. Idea of Progress which reveals Bury who believes and keeps deep interest in the concept of progress. 5. Life of St. Patric and his Place in History in which Bury came ahead as an historian of a critical method. 6. History of Greece which became a standard book on history. He explored almost all sources, including archaeological excavation. Bury's knowledge of Syria and Hebrew helped him in his history writing.

Apart from the above contribution of Bury to Cambridge school of historiography, he was the chief editor of Gibbons monumental history of the Roman Empire to which he contributed a lot to the classical Greek history. Such a great historian had a fellowship at the Trinity college, Durban in 1885. At the age of twenty, Professor Mahaffy invited him to assist in the editing of



Hippolytus of Euripides. In 1893, he was appointed as Professor of Modern History at Dublin in 1898. He was offered the Regius Professorship of Greek and thus held two chairs simultaneously which he resigned to become Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge in 1902 after the death of Prof. Acton, one of the most popular historians of that university. Naturally John Bagnell Bury proved himself one of greatest scholars while working in the university and enriched the Cambridge school of historiography a lot.

### Check your Progress

1. Discuss about the Cambridge school of historiography.
2. Trace the evolution of the Cambridge school of historiography.

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### 4.3 SUMMARY

It is said that there is a fashion to speak about the Oxford school and the Cambridge school of England but as a matter of fact England never developed any school of historians. If any school was there it was the Cambridge school of historiography, which was the self-styled school of historiography. The Cambridge school of historiography tried to emphasize on the need for scientific and objective history, which began with Sir John Seeley who was one of the eminent historians of England. As the universities in Germany and France took lead in the development of their historiographies and create their own styles in the writing of history, such efforts were not made in England for a long time because no universities in England began to teach history till the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although, they taught ancient history, it was not a separate department but was under the aegis of the department of literature. History as a separate department was created in 1869 and professor Sir John Seeley was appointed to head the department. This was the beginning of the teaching of history separately. Sir John Seeley made the teaching of history as secular, non-partisan, instructive and philosophical as well as one of the most popular departments in the university. Professor Seeley says that history should not be a

tool in the hands of politicians it should project that man is happy when he is free and spiritually independent. History contain philosophy, criticism, socio-economic facts ideas and movements in order to make it interesting. History should also be instructive and combine the lights of philosophy with the beauties of historical composition.

Although several professors contributed to the development of Cambridge school of historiography the contribution of Sir John Seeley, lord Acton and John Bury was treated very important. Professor Seeley wrote several books like Life and Times of Stein, The Expansion of England the Growth of British Policy and Life of Napoleon Bonaparte. He emphasized on political history and considered that a politician without the knowledge of history can not come to a rational judgment, he therefore started teaching political history and made it very popular branch of learning. In his first book Professor Seeley formed high regards for Stein for developing and making stronger Prussia that initiated struggle for independence. In his third book Professor Seeley delt with imperialism of England, but he never favoured imperialism in his career. He prepared to sacrifice material magnitude for moral and intellectual magnitude. He highlighted the greatness of England and traced the commercial rivalry between England and France in his third book, the Growth of British Policy, lastly, he referred to the continental policy of Napoleon Bonaparte in his short history of Nepolean Bonaparte for Encyclopedia Britannica. The most popular scholar historian of Cambridge School was Lord Acton, who was the real founder of the Cambridge School of Modern History. Lord Acton studied at various places and visited almost all countries in Europe. He succeeded Sir John Seeley as Regius Professor of Modern history at the Cambridge University in 1885. Although he had not written abundantly, his writings like Quietly Home and Foreign Review, article on German School for History, Outlines of the Cambridge Modern History and the editing of Comprehensive History of the Modern World are highly popular. John Pollock one of his students says that Lord Acton had a magnetic quality in his tone and enthralled the audience as he uttered each and every sentence with measured deliberation. Lord Acton contributed to the Cambridge school of historiography much more through his lectures on the French Revolution as he emphasized on the emancipation of conscience of man from the authority and his support to the Declaration of Rights of man. In short, Lord Acton was the combination of literary historian, scholarship of the Rankean School, the scientific spirit of Bury and several outgoing and incoming schools of historiography.

Another historian of the Cambridge School of Historiography was John Bury, who was the son of clergy of England and afront rank historian during his period. He was well versed in several

languages of Europe which helped him in enriching his scholarship. Naturally, he wrote several books of standard quality. Among his creations, A History of the Later Roman Empire, A History of the Eastern Roman Empire, Freedom of Thought Ideas of Progress, Life of Saint Patrick and his Place in History and History of Greece. He had held two chairs at a time as Professorship at Dublin and the Regius Professorship of Greek. He became the Professor of Modern History at Cambridge in 1902 and contributed a lot to the Cambridge school of historiography.

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#### **4.4 QUESTIONS**

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1. Give an account of the Cambridge school of historiography.
2. Trace the evolution of the Cambridge school of historiography.
3. Assess the contribution major historians to the Cambridge school of historiography.
4. Review the Cambridge school of historiography.



## **HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT:**

### **(C) Impact of the Revolt of 1857**

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.2 The Nature

5.3 The Policy of Annexation of Princely States was given up

5.4 Questions

5.5 Summary

5.6 Additional Reading

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#### **5.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After the study of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Grasp the background of the Revolt of 1857.
- Comprehend the nature of the Revolt of 1857.
- Know the changes made in the Indian administrations.
- Perceive the reorganization of the Indian away.
- Explain the racial bitterness between the British and Indians.
- Understand the setback to reforms in Muslim religion.

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#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

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The British Empire had been well established by 1856 and its territorial frontiers were finalized in the east and north-west. Its paramount power was well recognized by the princely states. By the middle of the nineteenth century the British Empire had expanded to include the whole of India. By war or diplomacy one independent state after another was brought within the orbit of subsidiary alliance system or incorporated in British dominion. This expansion of territorial possessions of the East India Company enhanced the revenues of the East India Company and opened new fields for British trade and capital investment. As the land was

the chief source of income, for nearly a century the British in India experimented with various modes of revenue settlements to extract the maximum share of the agricultural produce. Higher yield being the sole purpose, the socio-economic structure of the Indian community was wholly ignored and in consequence adversely affected.

In the beginning the East India Company was interested in exporting products of Indian industry, such as textiles, sugar and salt-petre. However, the new Industrial Revolution in England altered the character of trade and substituted export of raw materials like cotton and indigo for the products of British industry. Initially the company either imported bullion or used its local revenues to finance its purchases. However, later these were met by increasing import of British manufacturers, specially cotton textiles and luxury goods. Progressive increase in the incidence of taxation and rapid decline in industry as a consequence of the greed for profit by the British manufacturers led to growing impoverishment of Indian people and their transformation into mainly agricultural community.

Early in the nineteenth century a strong movement grew in England to spread Christianity into India and convert its Hindu and Muslim subjects to that faith. The Company's religious neutrality was demolished by the British Parliament when it permitted uninterrupted flow of European missionaries by the Charter Acts of 1813 and 1833. The Christian missions operating from many centers began their proselytizing activities, deriding Indian religions and converting people. To heighten their achievements, the missions undertook to educate the younger generation which was eager to benefit by the knowledge of English language and western thought. This orientation of young minds led to subversion of the indigenous faiths which shocked the orthodox section of the society.

There were many glaring abuses which had crept into Hinduism over the course of centuries. Islam in India had also drifted far apart from the simplicity of the days of the Prophet. Among the Hindus practices like sati, animal and even human sacrifices, female infanticide, child marriage etc., had led to the degeneration of the society. Many administrators, inspired by the new zeal of reformation generated by evangelicals and utilitarian liberalism adopted measures for their eradication. In this Endeavour they were greatly supported by Hindu reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy. As a consequence social legislation was enacted banning such practices as sati. Meanwhile, reform movements such as Brahmo Samaj aimed at the return to the pristine purity of the faith. New education also awakened the youth to revolt against the traditional faith, and some among them did not hesitate to

violently offend the feelings of the orthodox. The Widow Remarriage Act and the law of civil marriages further antagonized the orthodox.

The British state policy grew defiantly selfish, serving primarily the interests of the ruling nation. More territory brought more revenues and better commercial potentialities. Trade with India poured wealth into England and in the nineteenth century Indian industries that dared to compete with the English were practically wiped out. The plantation industries like indigo or tea were monopolized by English settlers who oppressed Indian tenants and grew greatly rich on a system of inequity and physical violence.

The complete exclusion of Indians from all positions of trust and power in the administration, and the manning of all higher offices both in the civil government and military forces by the English brought forth misery and a sense of humiliation to the people. The Indians were inferior subjects, almost on the verge of slavery in their own country, who had to work for the benefit of the foreign ruler. British policy was increasingly making the Indian people conscious of their low status.

The first century of British rule had not only brought the whole of India territorially under its sway, but had blunted the moral growth of the people and made them intellectually, culturally and economically subservient and unfree. Such a position was bound to react on the fortunes of the empire. There were waves of resistance, largely local or sectional, culminating in the Revolt of 1857, which almost shook the British Empire of India to its very foundation. According to Tara Chand, each region became, after annexation a scene of resistance and revolt, in which landholders and peasants were involved and in which the disbanded soldiers of the landlords, the ministers of religion and the dismissed dependents participated. Religious leaders, priests and mullahs manifested a sense of grievance against the foreign rulers and gave their support, though moral only, to all movements hostile to the new administration. In areas inhabited by tribal peoples such as Gonds, Santhals or Kols and Bhils, rebellion was frequent as the changes introduced by the British administration invaded the socio-economic structure of their communities.

The frequent risings of feudal lords and local chiefs in various regions of India had a more direct and serious impact on the British rule. The interests of this class had been adversely affected due to the new revenue system and administrative measures especially in the judicial machinery. They also resented loss of autonomy which they had enjoyed during the decades of the decline of the central authority. The resources of these classes were not adequate to bring down the British Empire. However, they were effective

enough to shake the foundation of its edifice and make it difficult for the British to consolidate their hold over the country.

Apart from these civil disturbances and risings of the disgruntled chiefs, disaffected landlords or the exploited peasantry in different parts of the country, the first half of the nineteenth century also witnessed many mutinies of the Indian sepoys in the British employment. These mutinies were the manifestation of their resentment against the interference by the British authorities with their traditional religious distinctions and caste privileges or inadequate emoluments. The first serious mutiny broke out at Vellore in 1806 as a protest against innovations in head dress and orders banning caste marks on forehead, or rudeness of English officers showing disrespect to Indian officers. There were other mutinies in the Bengal Army at the time of the Burmese Wars when the sepoys refused to cross the sea which was a taboo according to their religion. After the Sindh and Punjab wars the allowances of the sepoys were reduced. The sepoys were also moved by the feelings and sentiments of the common man to whom they belonged.

The events of 1857 were expected. They were neither unforeseen nor unpremeditated. The character of British rule made such events inevitable. Tara Chand opines that, 'the dangerous situation which was developing in India was inherent in the nature of the empire' The deprivation of the Emperor of Delhi of his privileges of royalty, the annexation of Oudh and the deposition of its Nawab on the excuse of misgovernment, the annexation of the states of Nagpur, Jhansi and many other princely states on the Principle of Lapse authored by Dalhousie and annexation of other regions by outright warfare created a lot of discontent among the dispossessed rulers and princes. Besides, Dalhousie also stopped or reduced pensions of the dispossessed chiefs, such as Rani Jindan Kaur, the widow of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Nana Saheb, the adopted son of the last Peshwa, Baji Rao II. The resumption of jagirs and Inam lands had resulted in intense misery to the old aristocracy and families of learned men and religious leaders.

The Indians were slaves in their own land. Racial discrimination was practiced to the extent of making the Indians feel inferior in every way to the people of the ruling race. Socially, politically and economically the Indians were subordinate to the British and occupied a position verging on serfdom. Indigenous industries had been ruined by the commercial and fiscal policy of the government and unequal competition with the imports of British manufactured goods. The artisans and craftsmen suffered due to unemployment and faced hunger and starvation. Under these circumstances every class in the country, from the peasant to the

prince, the civil servant and the soldier, the cultivator and the artisan, suffered and seething with discontent.

In the words of Tara Chand, 'the country was ripe for rebellion' the rebellion broke out on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1857 at Meerut. The sepoys shot their officers and marched towards Delhi. They persuaded the nominal Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah to take up the leadership of the revolt proclaiming him as the Emperor of India. The revolt spread to U.P., Bengal, Bihar, Central India, Rajasthan, Deccan and the Punjab. The disgruntled princes, Nawabs and chieftains, such as Nana Saheb, Rani of Jhansi, Tanya Tope, Kunwar Singh and others assumed the leadership of the sepoys. The Hindus and the Muslims, the higher classes and the lower, the landlords and the farmers, all saw an opportunity in the revolt of 1857, to avenge the wrongs done to them by the British. These classes of people lent their support to the rebels. It appeared that the Sepoy Revolt would develop into a real war of independence. However, by September 1857 the strength of the sepoys began to shatter in the face of the superior British arms and strategy. At the end the British succeeded in suppressing the Revolt of 1857, the first serious attempt on the part of the Indians to overthrow the British imperialism from India.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1) Discuss in brief the Indian Scenario on the eve of the Revolt of 1857.

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### 5.2 THE NATURE:

There is controversy whether the Revolt of 1857 was premeditated and a result of organized planning, or it was a spontaneous rising of the sepoys enraged by the issue of contaminated cartridges. Many writers on this event have also divergent opinion regarding its nature. The argument is centre around the questions - whether it was a mutiny or a national war of independence. A few writers, such as S.B. Chaudhari consider the Revolt of 1857 as 'the first combined attempt of many classes of people to challenge the foreign power'



Though the initiative came from the sepoys, they call it a civil rebellion. Scholars such as R.C. Majumdar have expressed the view that the revolt was largely the work of the sepoys, though the general masses also played part in it. A further opinion had been that the revolt was a national war of independence to drive the foreign rulers out of the country and to make it completely independent.

The Revolt of 1857 had in fact been much more than a mere mutiny. What had started as a rising of the Indian sepoys in the Bengal army gradually gathered support till it became the only large scale revolt in India in the nineteenth century. The Indian Sepoy had some specific causes for discontent. However, it is important to understand that the Indian Sepoy was also in most cases only a peasant in uniform and was affected by the general mood in the villages from which he came. Many of the soldiers of the Bengal army were Brahmins or Rajputs, and nearly a third of them came from Oudh. They were aware of the harsh and impatient manner in which the East India Company had set aside the ruling family and annexed the kingdom. They knew of the economic and social - changes which were taking place in the country, of the landholders who had been deprived of, and of the local industries which had been destroyed. Many times they themselves had marched in haste to stop such practices as, 'sati'. Thus, when the sepoys revolted in 1857, they incited as well as attracted sympathy from all the discontented sections of the Indian society. The army voiced grievances other than its own, and the movement spread beyond the army. The conservative and feudal elements in Bengal, Bihar, U.P. and Central India acted together in an effort to restore the past. Lord Canning, the Governor-General during the Revolt of 1857 recognized the nature and seriousness of the revolt when he said, 'The struggle which we have had has been more like a national war than a local insurrection. In its magnitude, duration, scale of expenditure and in some of its moral features it partakes largely of the former character'

Though a number of nationalist writers consider the Revolt of 1857 'the first war of national liberation', it is difficult to substantiate their view. The feelings of patriotism and the concept of Indian nationality were still in the stage of infancy and did not become sufficiently strong until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The revolt did not evoke real feelings of national unity and it remained localized, restricted and unorganized. Only one of the three provincial armies rebelled. Although the rebels received the sympathy of the people, the country as a whole was not behind them. The merchants, intelligentsia and Indian rulers not only kept aloof, but actively supported the British. In spite of the Doctrine of Lapse, the Indian rulers who expected their future to be safe with

the British liberally provided them with men and materials. The sepoys might have fared better if they had received their support.

Nearly half of the Indian soldiers not only did not rebel against the British but fought against their own countrymen. Of the thousands of landlords, who had been deprived of their estates, only the Taluqdars of Oudh rendered some help to the Sepoyees, and that too after some-time. In areas, where the peasants had suffered from heavy assessment, the Sepoyees were helped, but nowhere there was mass support. There was no unity of purpose among the leaders of the Sepoyees. The Sikhs, though humbled and humiliated only a few years before, remained loyal and gave unqualified support to the British in suppressing the uprising. Even the Gurkha sepoyees cooperated with the British in crushing the uprising.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.2) Bring out the nature of the Revolt of 1857.

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#### **5.2.1 Aftermath**

Whatever was the character and however short was the duration, the Revolt of 1857 marked a turning point in the history of Modern India. It exercised a tremendous influence upon the British policy in India. The character of the Indian empire in the last decades of the nineteenth century was shaped to a large extent by the events of 1857. The considerable support which the revolt obtained and the threat it posed to the very existence of British rule in India during the long summer of 1857, forced the British to examine afresh the entire nature of their connection with India.

#### **5.2.2 Assumption of the Administration of India by the Crown**

Different shades of political opinion in England was unanimous in one respect that once the flames of the revolt were put out, the East India Company should be set aside and the British Crown should assume direct responsibility for the administration of India. However, there was no unanimity regarding the way in which it should be done. Palmerston introduced a bill for the management of the Indian affairs in England by a President and a Council. However, his ministry fell before the bill could be enacted. Another suggestion was brought forward on behalf of the second Derby ministry when Disraeli introduced a bill providing for a President

and a Council elected by a complicated process. As the scheme was severely criticized Disraeli replaced the former bill by another bill which became an act in 1858.

Under the Act for the Better Government of India, India would be governed directly by and in the name of the Crown, acting through a Secretary of State. He was made directly responsible to the British Parliament. To assist and advise him in transacting the affairs of this country, a Council known as India Council, functioning 'during good behavior' would be created. The India Council was to consist of fifteen members of whom at least nine should have served in India for not less than ten years and have left India not more than ten years before their appointment to the Council. The India Council would be presided over by the Secretary of State, who could if necessary overrule their decisions. He would be also not bound to keep them informed of all communications with the Government of India. It would be left to his discretion what information would be kept secret.

In India the central administration continued to remain in the hands of the Governor General who also became the Viceroy or the personal representative of the Queen. He was subjected to a more rigorous control from White Hall. The Governor General acquired the additional title of Viceroy not due to the India Act of 1858, but due to the Royal Proclamation which was issued on 1 November 1858. The title was purely a ceremonial one, as there was no definition of Viceregal duties. However, it gave the head of the Indian Government an exalted status.

The acquisition of the control of Indian administration by the British Crown was announced by the Governor General, Lord Canning at a Durbar held at Allahabad on 1 November 1858 when he read out the Queen's Proclamation to the princes and the people of India. The Proclamation reflected the generosity, benevolence, justice, religious toleration and friendliness.

The Queen's Proclamation announced the transfer of power of administration over the British territories in India from the East India Company to the British Crown-in-Parliament. It called upon all subjects within the British territories in India to be faithful and to owe true allegiance to the British Government. The native princes were assured that the territorial integrity of their respective states would be respected. All treaties and engagements made by the East India Company with them would be maintained. They were further assured that their rights dignity and honour would be respected and the British Government would not interfere in their internal affairs.

The Proclamation assured freedom of religion to the people of India. They would be allowed to follow their own religious beliefs, practices and worship and the British officials were not to interfere in such matters. Equal and impartial protection of law was promised to the Indians. Further, the Queen's Proclamation assured equal opportunities to the people of India in Government services without distinction of race, creed etc. The Proclamation assured that while framing and administering law, due regard would be paid to the ancient Indian rights, usages and customs. The British Government would strive to achieve the welfare of the people of India. Finally, the Proclamation announced pardon and amnesty to all Indians who had taken part in the Revolt of 1857 against the British, but who were not guilty of having murdered British subjects.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.3) Discuss in brief the changes brought out in the administration of the British after the Revolt of 1857.

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### **5.2.3 Reorganization of the Indian Army**

Following the Revolt of 1857, British attitude towards the Indian army underwent drastic change. It was no longer possible for the British to assume that the Indian people would automatically stand by the Government in its hour of need. British bayonets considered being the only real foundation of the Indian Empire and its preservation was dependent upon those military precautions which political security dictated in a conquered country.

The Indian army, being the pioneer in the insurrection, was remodeled. The British element in the Indian army, it was felt, must be strengthened in order to ensure loyalty and efficiency. Thus, the number of Indian soldiers was drastically reduced from 238,000 in 1857 to 140,000 by 1863. The number of European soldiers was increased from 45,000 to 65,000. The proportion of Europeans to Indians was fixed at fifty-fifty in the Bengal army and one to two elsewhere. The remodeled and reorganized army left out Brahmins and Rajputs of Oudh and the new recruits were drawn largely from those martial races of the Punjab and Nepal and Pathans from the frontier who had proved their loyalty during the campaigns of the Revolt of 1857.

The division of the Indian army into three separate Presidency armies was continued. In keeping with the old Roman policy of 'divide and rule', the new recruits were often formed into separate units on the basis of caste, community or region. According to Jawaharlal Nehru, 'The policy of balance and counterpoise was deliberately furthered in the Indian army. Various groups were so arranged so as to prevent any sentiment of national unity growing amongst them, and tribal and communal loyalties and slogans were encouraged. Every effort was made to isolate the army from the people, and even ordinary newspapers were not allowed to reach the Indian troops. All the key positions were kept in the hands of the Englishmen, and no Indian could hold the King's Commission... No Indian could be employed in Army Headquarters except as a petty clerk in the accounts department. For additional protection, the more effective weapons of warfare were not given to the Indian forces, they were reserved for the British troops in India. These British troops were always kept with the Indian regiments in all the vital centres of India, to serve as 'Internal Security Troops' for suppression of disorder and to overawe the people' The result of all these measures was that a high sense of loyalty and discipline developed in the Indian army, and it became the backbone of the British Empire for several decades.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.4) Write a note on the organization of the Indian Army- after the Revolt of 1857.

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### **5.3 THE POLICY OF ANNEXATION OF PRINCELY STATES WAS GIVEN UP:**

Based on the need for a better balance of power, the reorganization of the Indian army had its counterpart in a new attitude towards the Indian states. The Indian ruling class, both Nawabs and princes still had considerable hold over their subjects. Thus, the British authorities realized the importance of their loyalty and support to continue the British rule in the country. Besides, even after the end of the Crimean War (1854-56), the British Government remained apprehensive of a Russian invasion of India. Under these circumstances, it was felt that the princely states would be of great help in case of any danger threatened from

abroad at a moment when the country was disaffected. Hence, the policy of extending the British dominion by annexing the princely states was given up. The Hindu as well as the Muslim rulers were granted the right of 'adoption'. New 'Sanads' were issued to them, and their existing territories were guaranteed. Although as a paramount power England retained the right to interference, the Queen's Proclamation assured the princes that the Crown would regard their 'rights, dignity and honour as our own'.

**Check your Progress:-**

Q.5) Highlight on the British policy towards the princely States.

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**5.3.1 Racial Bitterness between the British and Indians**

The most pervasive impact of the Revolt of 1857 can be found perhaps in the intangible sphere of human relations, especially in the attitude of the British and Indian people towards each other. The British, suspicious and alert considered themselves as an occupying power, garrisoning a hostile land. On the other hand Indians sought sustenance and self-respect increasingly within the bounds of their traditional culture.

Right from the beginning the British had formed a separate community in India. During the Revolt of 1857, stunned and shocked, the British saw the complacent Sepoy suddenly revealed as a rapacious murderer, the faithful bearer a treacherous villain. Hence, the British felt that safety could be found only among their own countrymen. Once betrayed by those whom they trusted, the British could no longer bring themselves to trust anyone with a brown face. All Indians were tainted. Thus, the bonds of race were quickly tightened, for survival itself was seen to depend upon it and the British began to look upon the Indians with increasing bitterness and hatred. The growing racial antagonism was provoked beyond measure by the reports of massacre and atrocities, in which English women and children were murdered in cold blood.

On the other hand, the manner in which the Revolt was crushed and the ruthlessness in which the rebels were suppressed left a deep sense of hatred among the Indians against the British. The rebels were suppressed with the ruthlessness of a Chingiz Khan and a reign of terror was let loose upon the armless people. According to G.T. Garret, 'The English killed their prisoners without trial and in a manner held by all Indians to be the height of barbarity - sewing Mohammedans in pig-skins, smearing them with pork fat

before execution and burning their bodies and forcing Hindus to defile themselves. They also massacred thousands of civilian population not only in Delhi, but also in the countryside. Certain guilty villages were marked out for destruction and all the men inhabiting them were slaughtered, and the indiscriminate burning of their inhabitants occurred wherever our armies moved'

The extraordinary outburst of the British against the Indian people, though aggravated by tales of atrocities, was at heart simply a reflection of the precarious nature of the British position in India. They were so few in number and uncertain in their hold over the people that as their familiar world collapsed about them that they responded by striking out madly and widely in all directions. By unleashing a reign of terror the British hoped to regain some sense of security in an alien country. As a result the struggle soon became, as John Lawrence realized, 'a war of races' in which every Indian was looked upon as fair game.

Lord Canning, the Governor General during the Great Revolt of 1857, though deeply stirred by the events of the uprising, never succumbed to the passions which manifested in indiscriminate vengeance. Right from the beginning he remained calm and acted with moderation. His policy on no occasion marked by softness or leniency. However, in spite of excitement all around Canning refused to govern 'in anger' or to treat the Indian people as a subject race. Hence, Canning took care in enacting emergency legislation to avoid any appearance of racial discrimination. The Press Act of June 1857, subjected all newspapers, English as well as vernacular to the same censorship. The Arms Act, restricting the carrying of weapons to those holding licenses, was made applicable to all classes of population. Similarly Canning did his best to check the cry for blood by putting restraints upon the activities of the special Commission established under the Acts XI and XIV of 1857. Under these Acts civil and military officers in the upper Provinces were empowered to try rebels and other suspected persons and award punishments, including the death penalty, without appeal. In the so called 'Clemency Resolution' of 31 July 1857, Canning cautioned these Commissioners against undue severity and withdrew from them the power of punishing rebels other than those charged with specific acts of rebellion or belonging to regiments which had murdered their officers. These measures of Canning brought him into universal contempt among his countrymen in India. They called him mockingly 'Clemency Canning' and petitioned the Queen for his recall. The Clemency Resolution met with widespread disapproval in England as well. But Canning refused to be swayed by such criticism, and as English opinion swung around to the side of moderation he was soon vindicated. In the years that followed, Canning's clemency was held up as a badge of honors.

### Check Your Progress

Q.6) Comment on the Racial Bitterness generated between the British and Indians after the Revolt of 1857.

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#### 5.3.2 Set-back to Reforms

The Revolt of 1857 convinced the British the strength and tenacity of the traditional socio-religious institutions of India. The British still remained proud of their moral superiority and looked upon their presence in the country as a tangible manifestation of this supremacy. But their self-confident optimism and their plans for the, rapid westernization of India through social reforms were irreparably shattered. The introduction of western ideas into a traditional Asian society, the British developed an attitude that it was far safer and more sensible to take the Indian society as it was, and to concentrate upon the provision of sound and efficient administration. The new attitude of caution and conservatism can be detected in almost every sphere of British activity in India after the Revolt of 1857. The abandonment of social legislation, the introduction of the Taluqdari system in Oudh, Canning's gentry-magistrate system, the conciliation of the princes, the reform of the Legislative Councils, all bear witness to its influence. The British wished to buttress the traditional institutions of India to minimize social change and to soften the impact of the western rule.

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#### 5.4 SUMMARY:

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The failure of the Revolt of 1857 and its aftermath convinced the Indian people that the method of 'blood and bomb' without proper organization and adequate preparedness would not be sufficient to challenge the might of the British imperialism. The educated Indians realized that the political revolution in the country could not be brought about without psychological revolution. With this aim in view, concrete and far reaching steps were taken in the post-revolt years to generate among the masses a genuine desire to liberate themselves from the age-old customs, traditions and dogmas and ultimately to bring about their political, social and economic advancement.



**Check Your Progress**

Q.7) Write a note on the set-back to reforms after the Revolt of 1857.

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**5.5 QUESTIONS**

1. Present a brief historical perspective of the Revolt of 1857
2. Write a detailed note on the nature of the Revolt of 1857
3. Examine the major positive effect of the Revolt of 1857
4. Bring out the important negative effects of the Revolt of 1857

**5.6 ADDITIONAL READINGS**

1. A.K. Majumdar, Advent of Independence, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan.
2. Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian nationalism.
3. B.R. Nanda, Essays in Modern Indian History.
4. M.M. Ahluwalia, Freedom struggle in Indian, 1858-1909.



## MODULE - II

# 6

## RISE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

### A1) Growth of Western Education and Its Impact on Socio Religious Movement

#### UNIT STRUTHERS

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Educational policy of the Company
- 6.3 Christian Missionaries and their Educational Activities
- 6.4 Charles Grant's Observations
- 6.5 The Charter Act of 1813
- 6.6 Educational Development between 1813 and 1854
- 6.7 Role of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Western Education.
- 6.8 Popularity of English Education
- 6.9 The Orientalist and Anglicist Controversy
- 6.10 Macaulay's Minute
- 6.11 A Critique of Macaulay's Minute
- 6.12 Wood's Education's dispatch of 1854
- 6.13 Hunter Educational Commission
- 6.14 The Indian Universities commission (1902)
- 6.15 The Indian universities Act of 1904
- 6.16 Indian religious to the universities Act of 1904
- 6.17 The Saddle Commission of 1917-1919:
- 6.18 The Hardtop Committee of 1929
- 6.19 The Sergeant Plan of 1944
- 6.20 Impact of Western Education
- 6.21 Summary
- 6.22 Questions
- 6.23 Additional Readings

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## 6.0 OBJECTIVES

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the educational policy of the East India Company.
- Perceive the educational work of the Christian Missionaries
- Grasp the observation of Charles Grant.
- Comprehend the Charter Act of 1813.
- Understand the Macaulay's Minute.
- Analyse the impact of Western education in India.

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## 6.1 INTRODUCTION :

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Education occupied an important position in the Indian culture since the time immemorial. India knew the art of writing as early as three thousand years B.C. which, subsequently led to the incredible advancement in literature. Naturally, it brought up world renowned universities like Nalanda, Vallabhi, Takshila which attracted students and Scholars from various parts of the world. It is said that Plato a Greek Philosopher, established his academy at Athens on the inspiration of these ancient Indian educational institutions.

The pre-British education system in India revolved around the Hindu Pathshalas and Muslim Madararas. The Hindu Pathshalas taught Vedic scriptures where as the Muslim Maktabas or Madararas imparted instructions based on the Holy Koran. These institutions were based on the mechanical recitation rather than developing the analytical and reasoning power of the student. Although, the subjects like grammar, logic and other allied subjects were taught no attention was paid to physical sciences and the cultivation of scientific mind of student.

During the eighteenth century, education lost its popular political patronage due to serious upheavals in the country that let the Hindu and the Muslim education to lapse into obscurity. In the same century, the East India Company acquired the political power through treachery in the Battle of Plassey in the 1757. The Company's Court of Directors declined to shoulder the responsibility of education in the country and it was left to the private individuals as their own affairs.

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## 6.2 EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE COMPANY:

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After controlling political power in 1765 Company's educational policy underwent a radical change. The Company that restricted its attention to the education of the European and Anglo-

Indian children, wanted to encourage the higher learning in classical languages by establishing Madarsha and Pathshalas. It gave pecuniary grants to learned Pandits and Maulavis and endowed educational institutions for higher religious studies. In order to win over the confidence of upper classes and consolidate its rule in India, the Company established some centers of higher learning and began to educate sons of influential Indians for higher posts. Among these, the most important were the Calcutta Madarshas and the Benaras Sanskrit College. These institutions were the beginning of the Orientalist School of Educational Policy. The followers of this school felt that the company should neither support the missionary proselytisation nor hastily attempt to teach western knowledge to the Indians. Because the classical learning in Sanskrit and Arabic, which the Hindus and Muslims had inherited, was good enough for all practical purposes. Thus, the Court of Directors agreed the orientalist views and tried to maintain these institutions of learning.

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### **6.3 CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

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Along with the educational activities of the Company, missionaries also conducted educational activities under the political authority of the Company. These institutions were very important which catered the needs of common people and became the pioneer of private enterprise in education in the history of education in modern India.

#### **6.3.1 Reasons which led the missionaries to undertake Educational Activities:**

There were several reasons for missionaries to undertake the educational activities, some of there ware as under:-

- .1 The most important reason of the missionary was to convert people to Christianity. As a matter of fact the Home Authorities of missions had refused to support the educational institution and opined that the priest had no business to found any school. But the practical experience of early missionaries led them to start schools as an important means of proselytization.
- .2 The second reason as Rev. Dr. D. O. Allen an eminent missionary of the American Board says; that missionaries should educate the people, in order to make them capable of understanding and appreciating the facts and evidences the doctrines and duties of the Scriptures.

- .3. Dr Allen further says, that it was necessary for missionaries to undertake education to influence the people and communicate them the advantages of Christianity and show them that Christianity rested on an intelligent perception of its doctrines and contained reasons for the performance of all its duties.
- 4 The next reason was of the means to procure and open ways of access to the people. It was the opportunity of preaching Christianity to them. Earlier, one of the greatest difficulties missionaries often experienced was obtaining access to the people. In such circumstances schools become very important means of communication with different children's and parents in which Christianity was made the subject of conversation.
- 5 There was equally important that the missionaries had to conduct schools for converted population, which mostly came from the lowest and illiterate rung of the Hindu Society. It was considered that reading the Bible was essential for salvation, hence, missionaries established schools to teach reading and writing to the new converts.
- 6 The missionaries were to start schools to secure employment to the converts for their living and a status in the society.

As the result of these reasons, the missionaries established schools at various places in the country among them the Danish mission worked hard and established schools in and around Madras. The Serampore Trio and other missionaries started schools under the guidance of Kiernander and Dr.Carey in Bengal. Dr. Carey, after working at Calcutta was shifted to Malda where he superintended Indigo Factory and translated the New Testament into Bengali. Thus the educational activities of the Christian missionaries spread through out India.

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#### **6.4 CHARLES GRANTS'S OBSERVATIONS:**

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The slow growth of missionary education before 1813 was due to the hostile attitude of the Company. Generally, the Company was favourable to the missionary work before 1763. But when the Company became sovereign political power it abandoned the policy of proselytization and began to maintain strict religious neutrality. The Company also supported the Orientalist policy in education between 1781 and 1791. The missionaries did not like this policy of the Company and convinced Wilberforce to move a Resolution in the House of Commons in favour of missionary education in India. But the Court of Directors opposed to this policy of missionaries. The people who agitated in favour of the missionary education was Charles Grant, the father of modern education in India

Charles Grant's observation of India was typically missionary. He described India's condition utterly immoral and wretched, where life and property were always in danger, it was utmost risky to confide even in one's dearest friend or relation. Learning was at a discount, appalling, ignorance and superstition prevailed in the land. The people were harassed by thugs, pindarees and mercenaries. Grant further says that the causes of India's miserable condition were 1. ignorance and 2. Want to a proper religion. He felt that the situation could only be improved if Indians were first educated and finally converted to Christianity. He says, that the true cure of darkness is the introduction of light. The Hindu's err, because they are ignorant and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of English knowledge through English language would prove the best remedy for their disorders.

Charles Grant's exaggerated and one-sided approach of India was criticised by Indians very much. No Indian agreed to Grant's view that mass conversions to Christianity alone could regenerate Indian society. The spread of English education would slowly but necessarily make the Indian people accept Christianity is also disapproved by the history of the last two centuries.

But the Charles Grant's suggestions of English education to Indian people are of great historical importance because he fore saw the future development in Indian education as early as in 1792. His suggestion of English education was adopted by William Bentinck about forty years later on the advocacy of Macaulay. Thus, Charles Grant's observation became a prophetic proposal and decision.

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## **6.5 THE CHARTER ACT OF 1813:**

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The missionaries in London were agitating for change in the Company's policy in favour of them where as the Company official like Minto the Governor General of India from 1806 to 1813 were in favour of the oriental education. In such background the Charter Act of the Company came up for renewal in 1813 in which the most important educational issues were discussed as under :-

- (a) Should missionaries be allowed to go to India and work in the territories of the Company for education and proselytisation of the Indian people?
- (b) Should the Company accept responsibility for education of the Indian people? If it should, what should be the nature and scope of its educational activities?

In case of the first issue as Richter observes, the missionaries succeeded in their object. They were allowed to enter India, reside there, preach, found churches and discharge all spiritual duties to fulfil their missionary calling in the widest sense.

In case of second issue, (1) in those days education was not regarded a state responsibilities even in England and naturally, the company did not like to shoulder the responsibilities of educating Indians. (2) The company was influenced by financial and not philanthropic motives hence resisted to oblige Indians in educating. (3) The people of India were most apathetic in education. (4) Indians were oppressed the most by the anarchy that followed the decay of the Mughal empire. They needed to restore the law and order first and hardly wanted anything else. Naturally, the task of accepting to educate the Indians was not easy for the company. But the opponents of missionary motives felt urgent need of creating a powerful rival agency in Indian education to counteract the result of missionary enterprise. Thus, they successfully carried out the 3rd section of charter of 1813. It was mentioned that the Governor General in Council after paying and defraying every expenditure should set aside a sum of Rs one Lac every year to revive and improve literature, encourage learned Indians, introduce and promote knowledge of the science among the inhabitants of the British India.

Thus the Charter Act of 1813 forms a turning point in the history of Indian education. The agitation which Charles Grant and Wilber force carried out for last twenty years become successful, and the education of Indian people was definitely included within the duties of the company. Missionaries began to land in India in large number; they established English Schools, which led down the foundation of the modern educational system in India.

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## **6.6 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN 1813 AND 1854:**

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There were several developments during this period as the company was compelled to accept the responsibility for education of Indian people and the Wood's Dispatch of 1854. In order to understand these developments in proper perspective it is necessary to study some features of this period.

### **6.6.1 General Features of this Period:-**

There are several general features of this period, some of them are as under:-

#### **1. This Period was of conquest and consolidation:-**

During this period, the Court of Directors or Parliament focused their attention on political issues like the relations with

Indian Princes, waging wars, signing treaties and setting up police and military administration in order to maintain law and order in India. Naturally no much attention was paid on education which became a major cause of slow progress in education in India.

## **2. Lack of Educationists:-**

There were no educationists to deal with the problem of education in India. Even the Education Department was established in 1854 by Charles Wood. Till then the education in India was dealt with by the Governor General, Governors, members of the Education Boards, Councils and committees, who were all either military or civil officers. They had neither professional training nor aptitude for education. These bureaucrats handled this problem in ham-handed way. Naturally, this was the principal reason that education during this period did not pick up speed.

## **3. Minor Role of Indian Leaders:-**

Although, people like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishvarachandra Vidyasagar and Jagannath Shankarset participated in policy-drafting in some matters but almost all educational policies were exclusively decided by the company official and missionaries. Because the number of educated Indians was very small and enlightened Indian opinion had not yet come into existence. Naturally educational development did not reach to the level as it was expected.

## **4. The Period of controversies rather than Achievements:-**

The Vagueness of the Charter Act of 1813 generated controversies regarding object, medium, agencies and method in organizing educational institutions in India. The Act further intended to revive and improve literature, encourage learned people, introduce and promote knowledge of sciences among the habitants of British India.

Regarding the controversy of the education there were several schools. One school of thought talked of the duty of England to educate its subjects in India. The second school of thought emphasized on introduction and spread of western literature and science among Indian people while third school of thought spoke about utilitarian objective of training Indians for subordinate positions in the company's service.

Regarding the agencies to be utilized for organizing educational institutions opinion differed. The first opinion favoured encouragement to missionary enterprises. The second view recommended that the indigenous schools should be managed by Indian people themselves. Where as the third school wanted to establish schools direct under the control of the company. In connection with methods to be adopted to spread education in



India, there were two theories as downward filtration theory and the direct attempt of the company to educate the masses. There was one of the most important controversies regarding the medium of instructions which also involved several schools of thought as:-

- a. The first school was headed by Warren Hastings and Minto, who advocated that western science and knowledge should be taught through Sanskrit and Arabic languages.
- b. The second school was dominated by Munro and Elphinstone, who suggested that western knowledge should be taught through the modern India languages to make the education the mass education.
- c. The third school was advocate by missionaries and younger civilians in the company, who wanted English as the medium of instructions of education in India. Thus, these schools and thoughts among the European officials of the company slowed down the progress in Western education in India.

#### **5 This was the period of Experiments:-**

During this period the company was to face problems of Indian education and was trying to arrive at a workable formula through the method of trial and error. The Court of Directors kept open mind and sanctioned initially every proposal that came up. There were. Therefore, several experiments going simultaneously in India as 1] Thomason's mass education on the basis of indigenous schools 2] Bombay Board of Education's official schools. 3] Bengal began English as medium of instruction 4] Bombay began to give education through the mother tongue of the student. Although, these views appeared contradictory policies but such experiments were definitely essential to come to final decision on Indian education.

Although, this was the situation in India, efforts were made to spread education by various organizations. Among them the company officials were ahead in it. In 1823 the Court of Directors appointed a General Committee of Public Instruction for the Bengal Presidency. H. T. Prinsep and H. H. Wilson were dominant among the above ten members committee. This committee was under the influence of Lord Minto and spent the grant of one lac on Indian education on the following work:-

1. Reorganized the Calcutta Madarshas and the Banarss Sanskrit college.
2. Established a Sanskrit Collage at Calcutta in 1824.
3. Established two more Oriental colleges at Agra and Delhi.

4. Undertook the printing and publication of Sanskrit and Arabic books on a large scale: and
5. Employed Oriental scholars to translate English books containing useful knowledge into the Oriental classical languages.

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### **6.7 ROLE OF RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY AND WESTERN EDUCATION:**

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Soon after the establishment of the Committee various elements expressed their opposition to its work. The first person to attack on the committee work was Raja Ram Mohan Roy an enlightened Indian, who submitted a memorial to the Governor General on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1823 and urged the Government to abandon the proposal of establishing a Sanskrit college at Calcutta. He lamented that the study of Sanskrit language and literature would burden the minds of youths with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions which were of little use to the youth or to the society. The students would acquire what was known 2000 years ago with additional subtleties produced by speculative men. He said that imparting education in Sanskrit would defeat the object of improving minds and outlook of the company's subjects in India. Roy further requested the Government to promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instructions, in which subjects like mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy and other useful sciences should be taught. The Government should appoint talented gentlemen educated Europe in to teach the above subjects and provide to colleges with all necessary books, instruments and well furnished required apparatus .

In spite of Roy's opposition to the Oriental education, the Government went ahead with the plan of opening new Oriental collages at Calcutta, Agra and Delhi and printed a large literature in Sanskrit and Arabic languages.

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### **6.8 POPULARITY OF ENGLISH EDUCATION :**

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Despite the encouragement to Oriental education by the General Committee of Public Instruction, the public opinion was rapidly growing infavour of English education. For which there were several factors responsible as under:-

1. The missionaries worked hard and popularized the English education in several parts of the country.
2. Raja Ram Mohan Roy as mentioned above began to urge the people to learn the English language and acquire the knowledge of Western literature and science through English.

3. English was growing politically important day by day because it was the language of the rulers, a person having capacity of speaking and writing material in English was able to secure lucrative posts in the Government. Naturally, people began to turn towards the study of English.
4. As a matter of fact, the study of English rapidly became the royal road to a black-coated profession with a decent income and an important status in society.
5. It is also said that the English education become panacea for all ills of the people in India. Naturally, people on large scale turn towards the English education.

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### **6.9 THE ORIENTALIST AND ANGLICIST CONTROVERSY:**

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The popularity of English education led the committee to attach English classes to the college of Agra and the Madarsha at Calcutta. It also led to establish District English schools at Delhi and Banaras. But these inadequate measures could not satisfy the public needs and constrained the committee to split vertically. Out of ten five members of General committee of Public Instruction supported the policy of encouraging Oriental literature and come to be known as the Orientalists. This group was headed by H. T. Princep, who was the secretary to the Bengal Government, Department of Education and belonged to the order members of the company. On the other hand the Anglicist group, favoured the English education had no leader, they were all younger servants of the company and were under the influence of Macaulay, who was the then President of the General Committee of Public Instruction and the Law Member of the Executive Council of the Governor General. This equal division of the committee could not work fruitfully for a long time and finally led them to submit their dispute to the Governor General in Council for solution.

#### **6.9.1 The Orientalists View:-**

This group centred on the forty third section of the Charter Act of 1813 as a sum of Rs one Lakh should be spent every year for [1] revival and improvement of literature [2] encouragement of learned natives of India [3] introduction and promotion of knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of British India.

The Orientalists argued that Indians had a prejudice against European knowledge and science unless they are presented to them through the language they respected and along with the culture to which they were passionately attached. It was, therefore the committee's translation of books from English to Arabic and Sanskrit was justified. Their argument was within the Act of 1813

and their policy could not be changed unless the Charter was amended by the British Government in England. Although, the Orientalist know their weaknesses, they never wanted to close down the Oriental educational institutions but they accepted that the Government should leave it to the option of the student to choose whichever education he preferred. They further argued that these oriental institutions were the only link through which the linkage could be established with the Indians.

### **6.9.2 The Anglicists:-**

The other group on the basis of education in India came up was known as Anglicist and it was under the influence of Macaulay. Although, he did not discuss in the Committee meeting but when it was placed in the Council, Macaulay, as a member interpreted the approach of the Anglicist as under:-

- 1) The word literature occurred in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Section of the Charter of 1813 could be interpreted as English literature.
- 2) Learned native of India could be applied to a person well versed in the philosophy of Locke or the poetry of Milton.
- 3) The object of promoting knowledge of science could only be accomplished by the adoption of English as the medium of instruction.
- 4) Macaulay wanted to close down the oriental educational institutions because they did not serve any useful purpose.
- 5) He argued that education to Indian in Sanskrit and Arabic means down right population and the grant which was made available from the public purse should not be spent on such work.
- 6) When he examined the problem of medium of instruction, he said that The Government should select either mother tongue, or oriental classical language or English on the group of expediency or desirability. The problem of mother tongue was brushed aside by the orientalists as well as Anglicists. Macaulay further argued that the common dialects spoken by natives contained neither literary nor scientific information. Whereas English, he said that a single self of a good European library was worth the native literature of India and Arabia.

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### **6.10 MACAULAY'S MINUTE:**

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Although, the argument of the Orientalists that Sanskrit and Arabic should be studied atleast the languages of law and religion of the Indian people. But Macaulay pointed out that the Government should follow the course of coding the Hindu and

Muslim laws in English and not to incur any expenditure on the oriental institution. Macaulay, on the above grounds strongly recommended that the company should spread Western education in India through the medium of the English language and the existing oriental institution should be used for the promotion of English education in India.

Lord William Bentinck accepted the argument advanced by Lord Macaulay and passed the Resolution on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1835 as under:-

1. The object of the British Government should be the promotion of the European literature and science among the natives of India. The funds appropriated for the purpose of the education should be best employed on English education only.
2. The Government should not oblige any school or collage of native learning.
3. The Government should not spend any amount on the printing of the oriental literature
4. The Government should spend almost all amount at the disposal of the committee on imparting knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of English to the Indians.

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### **6.11 A CRITIQUE OF MACAULAY'S MINUTE:**

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Macaulay's Minutes contained several inaccuracies and inconsistencies as his argument that the act of 1813 meant only English language and not Sanskrit or Arabic language. The British parliament's agreement to the teach the Western literature and science thought the medium of English and his view that a single shelf of good European library could contain more information than all the books of Arabia , India and china put together, exhibited indifference and ignorance towards the achievements of Indians. He aimed to raise English educated gentry in India as he said that we must form persons of, Indian in blood but western in test, opinion, in morals and in intellect means he wanted to meet imperial needs and not the popular needs in the country.

Macaulay further said that English was the language of rulling and the higher classes, who occupied position in the government of British India. English was the language of commerce in the East, South Africa and Africa. It, therefore, was in the power of the company to teach it to Indians. He thought that the English educated new class would enrich the vernaculars with the freely borrowed western arts and sciences. It means, he wanted to uproot the traditional Indian culture in the course by giving way to

the new British culture, which came to be known as the downward filtration theory of the anglicists.

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### **6.12 WOOD'S EDUCATIONS DISPATCH OF 1854:**

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The developments of western education during the period from 1835 to 1854 by various organizations institutions, which can be grouped as under:-

1. The educational institutions conducted by the missionaries
2. The educational institutions conducted by officials of the company in their individual capacity.
3. The educational institutions conducted by non-official, English man resident in India.
4. The educational institutions of the modern type conducted by Indians themselves
5. The indigenous educational institutions. This group utilised these institutions for western education in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras presidencies and spread it rapidly. In Bengole, they opened these schools and raised the number from 14 to 48 educational institutions. In 1835 the most important the Calcutta Medical college was established which brought in several revolutionary changes in the medical education of the country. In the same way in 1837 English replaced Persian language in all government offices and commercial establishments, which heightened the chances of English educated people to secure positions in Government services. In Bombay, the Board of Education came into existence in 1840, which raised its educational institutions upto ten in 1850. In 1845, the Grand Medical collage was established, whereas the Elphinston Institute opened several institutions to teach western sciences and other subjects. In Madras Presidency, the Scottish Missionaries opened their first college in 1841 and in a short span of time they increased schools more than the Bombay and Calcutta Presidencies.

#### **6.12.1 Circumstances Responsible for the Dispatch:-**

There were several factors responsible for the Dispatch of 1854, some of them can be summarized as under:-

- 1 There was no uniform system: - Although, there was rapid increase in the institutions of Western education, there was no uniformity in evaluation system of students, curricula and academic sessions. Moreover, announcement of Lord Harding that jobs would be given to English educated people only.

These events led the Government to create a body for common examination and award of degrees.

- 2 Frederik John Monat an official of Calcutta Medical college wanted to establish a university at Calcutta on the basis of London University, but the Board of Directors did not respond favourably. Therefore, there was a need of substantial educational review in country, which led to the Dispatch of 1854
- 3 Thomson, Lt. Governor of North Western India introduced a scheme of education in the Language of common people which limited to eight districts and confined to some important subjects. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor General of India was impressed by the scheme and he recommended it to the Board of Directors. Thus, there was a need of reconsideration of educational policy in India.

#### **6.12.2 Main Provision of the Wood's Dispatch of 1854:-**

Charles wood, the President of the Board of Control, nominated by the Ministry in England, formulated a policy on education in consultation with Alexander Duff and Marshmann in 1854. This policy contained several provisions, which were as under:-

1. **Objectives of the Educational Policy:-** This dispatch aimed to promote the Western education in India. Charles Wood said that the education which we desired should be extended in India. The object of it was the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe.
2. **Medium of Instruction:-** The next question dealt in the dispatch was the medium of instruction. English was the medium of instruction in high school. The vernacular languages were also considered important to diffuse the European knowledge to the people in India.
3. **Establishment of Universities:-** The dispatch made a provision to establish universities at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta on the basis of the University of London. These universities were to conduct examinations and award degrees or diplomas to successful candidates. The officials like Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, members of Senate and fellow were to look after the rules and regulations of fund's expenditure, administration, examination, standard of education and award of degrees. below the universities there were colleges affiliated to the universities.

4. **Graded Schools:-** Another provision was made for graded schools in which primary middle school and high schools were taken together. Vernacular was to be the medium of instruction at the lower level.
5. **Department of Public Instruction:-** This was to be established in every Province of the company for administrative purpose. The Department was to be headed by a Director, he was to be assisted by inspectors, assistants and Deputy Inspectors in his daily official work. This Department of public instruction was to review the education and system and was to submit its recommendation to the Government every year.
6. **Grants-in-Aid:-** To encourage the private efforts, missionaries and other institution to spread the western education the Wood's dispatch made a provision for Grant-in-Aid on certain condition as
  1. Imparting good and secular education.
  2. possessing good local management
  3. agreement to submit to inspection by Government officers and to abide by such other conditions as may be prescribed and
  4. Levy a fee, however small, from the pupils.
7. **Training Colleges: -** The dispatch for securing properly qualified teachers for schools and colleges made one more provision for teachers training on the basis of training conducted in England. It was also intended to make this profession of school master as attractive to Indians as other services of the company.
8. **Vocational Education: -** In order to create more job opportunities, the dispatch stressed upon the establishment of technical schools and colleges along with the classical education in India. These technical schools and colleges were to impart the vocational training to the talented youths, whom the company wanted to absorb in the other branches of the public service.
9. **Female Education: -** Along with vocational education, the dispatch prepared to give suitable school books and impart good education to daughters of Indians. Therefore, some of the native gentlemen came ahead to help in this effort. Among such people Rao Bahadur Mangalbhai Karamachand donated Rs twenty thousands to found to native female schools in Ahmadabad for female education.
10. **Scholarships: -** Last but not the least, the dispatch made provision for awarding scholarship to the talented and



industrious students in India. It also intended to link lower schools, higher schools and colleges successively.

### 6.12.3 Critical Appraisal of the Despatch:-

This Despatch of 1854 established an education department in each province of British India and universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. It gave impetus to primary and secondary education. It introduced the Grant-in-Aid system which led to establish training centers for teachers and the foundation of the present education system in the country.

M. R. Paranjape says that the despatch of 1854 enables us to find out how far the educational objective we have achieved, which were mentioned in it and the changes brought about in the educational objectives in the last hundred years.

The other side of the despatch was that many important recommendations mentioned in it were not carried out. The Indian languages, which were promised to be encouraged but it was not done and they continued to languish till the last. The grant-in-aid which was to withdraw the Government from educational activities and encourage the private enterprise in education but it never complied with this principle. The Government neither supported fully to the Christian missionary on the apprehension of their motive to secure converts to Christianity nor believed Indian management in their capacity of conducting education efficiently. The plan of mass education suggested in the despatch was never realised. Naturally, it generated several draw back in the present educational system of India.

Although, there were several defects in the Despatch of 1854, we should not belittle the work done by the same Despatch which was called the Magna Charta of Indian education. The Despatch, no doubt did a lot towards the evolution of a good system of education in India as per the educational ideals which were prevalent then.

### Check your progress :

Q.1 Trace the educational development in India between 1813 and 1854.

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### 6.13 HUNTER EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION :

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After the 1857 Despatch, the Great Uprising of 1857 terminated the rule of the East India Company and brought India under the direct control of the British Crown. Although, all political parties in England exploited India the most, the liberal leader Gladstone, who became Prime Minister in 1880 was in favour of Indians. He sent Lord Ripon as Viceroy of India, who in turn introduced a number of reforms in the country, his appointment of the Hunter Commission was one of them. The Commission surveyed the whole country and passed around two hundred resolutions. Some important resolutions were as under:-

- 1 The first recommendation the commission made was regarding the Primary education, its extension and improvement of the indigenous schools. It recommended more aid from the local as well as the provincial funds and revenue to make education more useful and enable to teach practical subjects like arithmetic, accounts, natural and physical sciences
- 2 As per the second recommendation the commission made the primary education the responsibility of the Government which was to be conducted through the vernacular. It was to be run by the Municipal and District Boards.
- 3 The system of Grant-in-aid was to be liberalised and extended it to the secondary education which was to be run with the help of the local authority. This education was divided into two streams as general or classical, which was required to qualify for the entrance examination to the degree classes and the other stream was known as vocational education, which was required for industrial or commercial career.
- 4 The commission made one more provision, which was for physical and moral training of the student. Indian games like gymnastics, drills and physical exercises were recommended for the same. There was also a provision to impart instruction regarding moral character.
- 5 Although, there were no facilities for female education, the commission recommended for spread of female education, wherever it was possible.

As a result of these recommendations schools, colleges and universities were founded throughout the country. Among them the Universities like Punjab, Allahabad and Banaras Hindu University were prominent.

### **6.14 THE INDIAN UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION (1902)**

The period between the Indian Universities Commission in 1902 and the transfer of the education to Indian control in 1921 had several outstanding features in the field of education as:-

1. Recommendation of large funds
2. Active role of the State in Education
3. Attempts were made to bring qualitative change in all types of education
4. Unexpected expansion in all branches of education
5. There was simultaneous growth in the militant nationalism and education.

Lord Curzon gave first priority to university reforms in his programmes and appointed a commission on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1902. He asked the commission to inquire into the condition and prospects of the universities established in British India and make recommendation for improvement of the Indian education. The commission submitted its detailed report to the British Government in India as under:-

- 1 The Commission once again adopted the London University as the model for university education in India.
- 2 The commission was precluded from reporting secondary education as the commission of 1882 was precluded on university reforms.
- 3 There were two fundamental problems before the Commission as :-
  1. to determine the types of university organization that was to be developed in India, and
  2. to propose a transitional arrangement to enable the Government to spread education in the country.
- 4 The recommendations of this Universities commission included the following:-
  1. The organization of universities
  2. Strict supervision of college by the university
  3. Closer attention to the condition under which students live and work;
  4. Assumption of teaching by the university.
  5. Changes in curricula and the methods of examination

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### **6.15 THE INDIAN UNIVERSITIES ACT OF 1904:**

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Lord Curzon was the architect of the Bill of the Universities Act of 1904, while introducing the Bill, he declared that he wanted to raise the standard of education and convert the examining bodies into teaching institutions. Along with this he made several provisions as under:-

1. In the Universities Act of 1904, the enlargement of the functions of the university proposed.
2. The second change was proposed of the manageable size of the University Senate. It, therefore, was decided that a university fellows should not be less than fifty and more than hundred, he should hold the office for five years and not for life.
3. The third change was made regarding the election of the university fellows. The Act provided that twenty fellows should be elected at the three older universities and fifteen at the other two universities.
4. The fourth change was regarding the statutory recognition to Syndicate and giving adequate representation to university teachers on the Syndicate concerned
- 5 The next change was regarding the stricter condition for affiliation of colleges to a university and periodical inspection of affiliated colleges by the Syndicate in order to maintain standard of efficiency
- 6 The Indian universities Acts of 1904 provided that the Government may make any addition and alteration to regulations of the Senate as may be necessary or on the failure of the Senate to do so within a specified period
- 7 The last but not the least the Section 27 of the Act laid down that the Governor General may define the territorial limit of the colleges under the Act of Incorporation.

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### **6.16 INDIAN REACTIONS TO THE UNIVERSITIES ACT OF 1904:**

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The Indian public opinion opposed to this Act because under the pretext of reforms Government was trying to vest all power in the hands of European professors and educationists with a view to sabotage the development of Indian private enterprise in higher education. Along with this the Indian public opinion focused on the following issues:-

- 1 Without making any provision for financial assistance to universities, teaching functions of the universities would remain a dead letter.

- 2 Although the principle of election in universities was welcomed the few open seats and failure to provide election by professors did not serve the purpose of the election.
- 3 Restriction on the total number of fellows in the university created a fear of European majority in the constitution of the Indian universities.
- 4 Stricter provision for affiliation of colleges was opposed because that strengthened the majority of Europeans in the reorganized bodies of the university.
- 5 The last but not least the Indian public opinion directly opposed to the Government domination in the university administration. It was argued that this Act made universities one of the departments of the Government of daily administration.

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### **6.17 THE SADDLER COMMISSION OF 1917-1919:**

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In 1917, the Government appointed the Calcutta University Commission to enquire into the problems and make recommendations to correct them. This commission came to be known as the Saddler Commission after its President Dr. M.E. Saddler, the Vice Chancellor, University of Leeds. D. Gregory, Mr. Philip Hartog, Prof. Ramsay Muir, Sir Asutosh Mookerji, the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal and Dr. Zia-ud-din Ahmed were other member of the commission. Its recommendations were as under:-

1. This Commission studied the problems of secondary and university education because it held the view that improvement of secondary education was essential for the improvement of university education. The Commission, therefore, made radical recommendation for reorganization of secondary schools as under:-
  - i) The Intermediate examination made the dividing line between the university and secondary courses.
  - ii) Government should create new Intermediate Colleges to provide instructions in Arts, Science, Medicine, Engineering which should be run either independently or attached to selected high schools.
  - iii) Intermediate examination should be the test for university admission.
  - iv) A Board of secondary and Intermediate Education should be established for administration and control, it should consist of the representatives of Government, University, High schools and the Intermediate Colleges.

- 1 Calcutta university had very large number of Colleges and students; it was unmanageable to a single university, the commission, therefore, recommended to (a) establish Dacca university (b) resources should be pooled together to establish teaching university at Calcutta (c) Colleges in mofussil area should develop resources for some university centers at some important places.
- 2 The Commission made general recommendations regarding university functions as under: - (a) Regulation regarding university governing should not be rigid. (b) Honors courses should be different than the pass courses. (c) The Degree should be of three years after the intermediate stage (d) A special selection committee should appoint Professors and Readers with the consent of external experts. (e) Encourage Muslim students for education and safe guard their interests. (f) A Director of Physical Training of professor's rank and a Board of Students welfare should be established for health and physical welfare of students.
- 3 The Commission made other recommendations; regarding (1) Female education (2) Training of Teachers (3) Technological Sources (4) Professional and vocational training .

As per the recommendation of the Commission new universities at Mysore, Delhi, Nagpur, Agra, Hyderabad, Travancore, Patna, Banaras, Aligarh, Dacca and Lucknow were established. In the same way other universities like Santiniketan, Osmania, S.N.D.T., Kashi, Vidyapith, Jamia Millia and Gujarat Vidyapith were also established.

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## **6.18 THE HARTOG COMMITTEE OF 1929:**

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The rapid expansion of Western education created several new problems. For instance, the official opinion held that Sudden rise in quantity of educated people led to a dilution in quality of education and made Indian education system largely ineffective and wasteful. Therefore an Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission was established which later on came to be known as the Hartog Committee after its Chairman Sir Philip Hartog. Hartog agreed that the hasty expansion of education was the reason for loss of Quality in education. He suggested to have a break at the middle school level from where the student could choose his vocation. He thought, this would prevent the number of students proceeding to matriculation and higher education. In the same way he recommended more practicals like tutorials than lectures in higher education.

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### 6.19 THE SARGENT PLAN OF 1944:

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The Central Advisory Board of Education engaged itself in examining critically the aspect of Post-war Indian education. In 1943, the Board came to certain findings and prepared comprehensive plan of educational development and submitted it to the Executive Council of the Governor General for its consideration, which came to be known as the Sargent Report of 1944. The Report aimed the same standard of educational attainments in India as had already been admitted in England, with this end in view it provided for

- a) Pre-primary education for children between 3 and 6 years of age.
- b) Universal, compulsory and free primary or Basic education for all children between 6 and 14 years of age.
- c) High school education for selected children between the age of 11 and 17.
- d) A university course of three years beginning after the Higher Secondary Examination
- e) Technical, Commercial and art education for fulltime and part time students on an adequate scale.
- f) Liquidation of adult illiteracy and development of public libraries in a period of 20 years.
- g) Proper training of teachers for implementation of the plan.
- h) Compulsory physical education, medical inspection, provision of milk and midday meals for under nourished children.
- i) Employment bureau, education for handicapped children and social and recreational activities.

#### Check your progresss :

Q.1 Explain in brief the educational development between 1882 and 1944.

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### 6.20 IMPACT OF WESTERN EDUCATION:

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The Englishmen over-rated the achievement of English education in India while Indians pointed out its failure in comparison

with educational advances in England itself or in dependent Eastern countries like Japan or dependencies like Philippines. The survey of Western education in India reveals that it failed to create a national system of education mainly due to the following reasons:-

**1 Western education failed to realize the place of India in the Comity of nations.**

Western education never visualized a self-respecting and independent India. Missionaries looked upon her as a recruiting ground for Christianity. The Despatch of 1854 regarded her as the producer of raw material and the buyer of the finished products of the British industries. The British imperialist philosophy refused to accept India as a sovereign nation with her unique contribution to universal culture. Naturally, it failed to create national educational system in the country.

**2 Western education failed to evolve a synthesis of East and West:-**

The Christian missionaries regarded Christianity and Western culture inseparable. The orientalist glorified the Indian past as the Indian chauvinists did. The British officials who framed the policy of western education in India believed with Kipling that "East is East and West is West; and never the twain shall meet." Victorians regarded Indian as lesser breeds without the law; treated loyal to English educated Indian but not admitted them to European Clubs, and created racial hostilities which made synthesis very difficult. On the whole, there was no planned official attempt to bring about a synthesis of the East and the West. Naturally, the western education failed to create national education system in India.

**3 Western education had inadequate aims in India:-**

The Charter Act of 1813 talked of the revival of oriental literatures and encouragement to learned natives. The Despatch of 1854 spoke of the diffusion of the improved European literature and science in India whereas the Commission of 1882 did not discuss the issue at all. Lord Curzon talked of remedying the inherent defects of Indian intellect whereas the Resolution of 1913 declared the formation of Character was the objective of education in India. The utilitarians emphasized on training Indians for employment in Government department means emphasis placed upon education varied time to time. Thus, this could not create national system of education in India.

**4 Western education adopted wrong methods in India:-**

It neglected the indigenous system of education depended upon English models and schemes which evolved in England was a wrong step. Because England was urban, rich and industrialized



where as India was rural, poor and agriculture. This contrast in socio-economic background made England a poor model for India. This assumption led western education in India not to develop national system of education.

### **5 Failure to develop India socially and economically:-**

The British rule in India did not develop political, social and economic life of people. Because national education was needed to regenerate the above life which the British could not evolve truly in the country.

### **6. Western education failed to secure the necessary personnel:-**

Although, the Company had several officials in India, it could not mobilize necessary personnel to plan and organize a national system of education in India. In the same way, the western education had no consistent drive or programme to convert it into the national system of education.

The failure of western education to create a national system of education in India it does not mean that this education did not achieve any thing to bring out any long term and short term effects. As a matter of fact, the western education brought in several long term impact in the country, which can be summarized as under:-

#### **1. Western education introduced Indians to English Language:-**

The western education introduced Indians to English language and literature and through them to all the thought this led to Indians to experience all scientific and industrial development, social and political philosophy of the west. This happened on such time when the Indian culture and social organizations were at their lowest ebb on which the western education created tremendous vivifying effects. It absolved the Indian mind from the thralldom of the old ideas and laid the foundation of Renaissance in modern Indian life. Indian contact with the English language greatly enriched the mosaic Indian culture and become a boon to all Indians alike.

#### **2. Western education made scientific and critical study of the ancient Indian culture:-**

All the western scholars of oriental languages began to study the ancient Indian culture through scientific, critical, analytical, simplified and balancing new method and enriched it very largely for which Indians acknowledged their sense of gratitude forever.

#### **3. Development of modern Indian languages:-**

Although, the British suppressed all Indian languages initially to make English as a medium of instruction. But they could not do

so for a long time. The British were the first people who gave great impetus to the development of Indian modern languages. The British officials and missionaries began to study the modern Indian languages, wrote their grammars, compiled good dictionaries and published many books and paper in those languages, whether they were of common people or aboriginals. Indians often acknowledged their indebtedness to Sir George Grierson for his detail study of Indian languages and his publication of the Linguistic Survey of India. Thus, due to the western education led European scholars to study the modern Indian languages.

#### **4. Development of Indian Art:-**

As the European scholars developed modern Indian languages, they also developed Indian Art, architecture, painting and sculpture. They only brought out the most important and pioneering work in those arts and made invaluable ancient treasures available to all people of East and West alike. Indian offered their thanks to lord Curzon for his pioneering move to preserve our ancient monuments.

#### **5. Awakening in modern Indian life:-**

The western education was responsible for awakening in several humanistic trends in modern Indian life. They were as the sympathy for the underdog, the crusade against untouchability, the emancipation of modern Indian women from their problems and the spirit of social service in every walk of life. These movements deeply indebted to the western education in India, which was started by the British administration. Initially, the British historians claimed that these humanistic trends were too tall to be admitted by the Indians, but it was proved wrong and they all were strengthened by the revived study of ancient culture and the rising tide of Indian patriotism.

#### **6. Spread of University and collegiate education:-**

Western education was responsible for the spread of university and collegiate education in India by establishing various educational institutions and adopting various measures as the Inter University Boards, adoption of incorporation of new universities, changing old affiliating universities, provision for research, development of inter-collegiate and inter-university activities, establishing intermediate colleges, establishing primary and secondary schools, sorting and resolving problems of teachers at various levels, making provisions for vocational courses and establishing education Departments at each and every level.

7. Western education introduced Indians to the modern democratic institutions of Europe and the Western system of law and medicine. It also acquainted with the auxiliary tools of popular education as (1) Press (2) Cinema (3) Radio (4) Library and (5) Museum. There

is hardly any need to list any contribution of the Western education which has much significance in the life of Indian people. As it was said by Lord Curzon in 1904 that the work of the rock of doom, it was righteous work and should remain for ever.

### Check Your Progress:-

1. What was the initial educational policy of the East India Company?
2. Discuss the work of Christian missionaries in the field of education.

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### 6.21 SUMMARY :

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Education occupied an important position in Indian culture since the ancient period. Indians knew the art of writing as early as three thousand years B. C. which subsequently led to the incredible advancement in literature. Naturally, it brought up world renowned universities like Nalanda, Vallbhi and Takshasila which attracted students and scholars from various corners of the world. It is said that Plato a Greek philosopher established his academy at Athens on the inspiration of this ancient Indian educational institution.

The pre-British education system in India revolved around the Hindu Patshala and the Muslim Madarsas. The Hindu Patshalas taught the Vedic scriptures whereas the Muslim Madarasas imparted instructions based on the Holy Koran. These institutions involved themselves in a mechanical recitation rather than developing the analytical and reasoning power of the student. During the Eighteenth century, education lost its popular patronage due to serious upheavels in the country, consequently that led the Hindu and Muslim education to lapse into obscurity forever. On the other hand the East India Company acquired the political power through treachery in the Battle of Plassey in 1757.

Although, the company had declined to shoulder the educational responsibility initially, after the treaty of 1765, the Company changed her policy radically and opened educational institutions to win over the support of upper classes. Along with the company, the Christian missionaries also began to concentrate

their attention on education of Indian people. They had different motives to start educational institutions as to convert Indians into Christianity, desire them to understand the doctrine of the scripture, its propagation, and several other motives were there. In the English or the western education involved several steps and happenings. Among them Charles Grant's observation and the Charter of 1813 were important. The Charter Act of 1813 made a provision that the Government should spend Rs One Lac on the revival of literature in Indian languages.

The period between 1813 and 1854 had several general features as this period was of conquest and consolidation, it lacked educationists, no Indian leader except Roy played major role in education and this period had more controversies than achievements. Raja Ram Mohan Roy only favored western education and made it popular in the country. He did not favour and support the Oriental view of education in India. As result Lord Macaulay was asked to prepare his minute and that was sanctioned by Lord William Bentinck. Macaulay's Minute started the English education in the country. In 1854, the Wood's Despatch came in to being, in which very wide and comprehensive provisions were made.

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## 6.22 QUESTIONS:

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1. Analyses the Orientalist and Anglicist controversy in the educational history of India.
2. Examine the main provisions of Wood's Despatch of 1854.
3. Assess the university education system during the British period of India.
4. Discuss the main provisions of the Saddler commission and the Sargent plan in the context of university education in India.

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## 6.23 ADDITIONAL READINGS:

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1. R. G. Wilder, Mission Schools in India
2. M. A. Sherring, The History of Protestant Missions in India
3. Syed Mahmood, History of English education in India
4. M. R. Paranjape, A Source Book of Modern Indian Education.



## RISE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

### A2) Growth of Western Education and Its Impact on Socio Religious Movement

#### UNIT STRUCTURE

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Brahmo Samaj
- 7.3 The Prarthana Samaj :
- 7.4 The Arya Samaj
- 7.5 The Ramakrishna Mission :
- 7.6 The Theosophical Society:
- 7.7 Summery
- 7.8 Questions
- 7.9 Additional Readings

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#### 7.0 OBJECTIVE:-

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to

- Perceive the historical background of the socio-religious reform movements.
- understand the foundation of the Brahmo samaj
- Explain the life and work of Raja Ram Mohan Roy.
- Perceive the foundations of the Prarthana samaj.
- Know the work of the Arya samaj.
- Comprehend the Ramkrishna Mission and the Theosophical Society.

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#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION:-

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With the establishment of 'Pax Britannica', law and order, peace and security slowly returned to the long-distressed India. A new polity was gradually built up in the place of one which was in

ruins. The framework of a well-organized administrative system had been created. This system was operated by a public service which was efficient but alien, exclusive and remote. A new judicial system had been introduced. 'Rule of Law and Equality' before the law was upheld. Their leveling and liberating effects soon manifested themselves. The old economic system was being modified by the introduction of new pattern of trade. English education, first introduced as a result of private initiative but later aided by state action, had begun to spread in the larger towns. The knowledge of English coupled with the impact of Christianity and western ideas aroused a new spirit. This new spirit was eager and restless and questioned about the very foundations of religious, social and political life in India. Thus, the British dominance of the country brought about drastic changes in the various aspects of people's life and attitude.

The basic ideas and institutions of India had been the targets of the western challenge. As it became practically impossible for the Indians to dislodge the British power from the country, they turned their attention to the religious, social and cultural renaissance. Thus, during the first decades of the nineteenth century, western impact had started the process of self-criticism and reform of religion and, society. The impact of the western education through the medium of English and a spirit of rationalism aroused both Hindus and Muslims to set their houses in order. They began to introspect and realize that their original, sublime religions were defiled due to blind traditions, acquiescence to evil customs, meaningless rituals, irrational practices and superstitious beliefs. Both Hindus and Muslims sought to themselves of the socio-religious evils in order that the stream of spiritual life should flow clear and strong, leading the individual and society towards the goal of freedom and happiness.

The socio-religious reform movement, also known as the Indian Renaissance was the spiritual character of the national awakening. It was the expression of the rising national consciousness. These movements increasingly tended to have a national scope and programme. Their aim was the reconstruction of social, religious and cultural life of the people. Religious reform aimed at rejection of elements which were considered incompatible with the original faith. A number of schools of thought arose both among the Hindus and Muslims. In spite of their outward differences, they showed similar trend, i.e., a vivid consciousness of the need for religious reconstruction and moral reform and an attempt to unite all those professing the same faith. The socio-religious reformers were of the opinion that their political failure and the resulting misfortune were due to the moral decline and social degeneration which was the consequence of the neglect of true religion.

The spirit of reform embraced almost the whole of India beginning with the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal leading to the foundation of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828. Besides the Brahmo Samaj which had its branches in several parts of the country, the Paramahansa Mandali and the Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra and the Arya Samaj, in the Punjab and North India were some of the important movements among the Hindus. There were several other regional and caste movements like the Kayastha Sabha in Uttar Pradesh and the Sarin Sabha in the Punjab. The backward castes also started the work of reformation with the Satya Sodhak Samaj in Maharashtra and the Sri Narayana Dharma Pratipalana Sabha in Kerala. The Ahmadiya and Aligarh Movements, the Singh Sabha and the Rehnumayi Mazdeyasana Sabha represented the spirit of reform among the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Parsees respectively. Though regional in scope and content and confined to a particular religion, their general perspectives were remarkably similar. They were regional and religious manifestations of a common consciousness.

It is important to note that, although religious reformation was a major concern of the socio-religious reform movements, none of them were exclusively religious in character. Strongly humanist in inspiration, their attention was focused not on otherworldliness and salvation but on worldly existence.

Promotion of a national outlook was an apparent aim of the various reform movements. Besides, these movements, in varying degrees, emphasized and fought for the principle of individual liberty and social equality. The principle of individualism was the basis of modern secular thought. Individualism combined with political and economic factors provided a powerful basis to the growth of nationalism. Since the establishment of the British rule a new society was emerging in India which had distinct needs differing from those of the old society. Being imbibed with the liberal western ideas, the new intelligentsia recognized these needs and launched movements to reform social institutions, religious outlooks and ethical concepts of the past. The new educated class felt that the regenerated society could politically, economically and culturally progress only on the basis of liberal principles such as the recognition of individual liberty, freedom of expression of human personality and social equality. The various reform movements represented an attempt of the Indian people to democratize social institutions and remodel old religious outlooks in line with the new social requirements.

Another important aspect of the socio-religious reform movements was an Endeavour towards democratization of the Indian society and religion. They sought to reform or dissolve such disruptive institutions as the caste system which were obstacle in

the path of social and at large the national unity. Further, these reform movements tried to establish equal rights of all individuals irrespective of caste, religion or race. The reformers believed that democratization of institutions and social relations was very essential to build up a sound national unity to achieve political freedom and to further the social, economic and cultural life of the Indian people. The socio-religious reform movements touched all aspects of human activity. The national democratic awakening strengthened by these movements found manifestation in all fields of national life. In politics, it gave birth to the movement demanding administrative reform, self-government, Home Rule, Dominion Status and eventually independence. In the social field the principle of individual liberty equality and self-determination were asserted. Thus, the socio-religious reform movements were the expression of the national awakening in India and aimed at a revision of the medieval social structure and religious outlook on a more or less democratic basis, on the principle of individual liberty and human equality.

Given the inter-connection between religious beliefs and social practices, religious reformation was a necessary prerequisite for social reform. Not only was the social life of the Hindus but also of the Muslims strongly influenced by religious tenets. Religion was the dominant ideology of the times and it was not possible to undertake any social reform without reforming its source, the religion. Thus, the reformers initiated religious reforms and moved on to attack social evils. In order to appreciate the monumental task undertaken by the socio-religious reformers it is important to review the nature of the socio-religious conditions that had existed during the British rule and the attempts made by the various individual reformers, their followers and organizations to bring about the desired reforms.

Indian society in the nineteenth century was caught in a vicious web of religious superstitions and social obscurantism. Hinduism, as Max Weber observed, had become a compound of magic, animism and superstition' and practiced abominable rites like animal sacrifice and physical torture had replaced the worship of God. Nowhere in the world did religion dominate and determine the life of an individual as in India. His social life, his birth, marriage and death, all were strictly controlled by the religion. The priests exercised an overwhelming and unhealthy influence on the minds of the people. Idolatry and polytheism helped to reinforce their position. Their monopoly of scriptural knowledge and of ritual interpretation gave a deceptive character to all religions. People lived in submission, not only to God, the powerful and unseen, but even to the fancies, whims and wishes of the priests. The exploitative nature of the religious ideology went to the extent of



even women offering themselves to the priests to satisfy their carnal pleasures.

Social conditions were in an utter depressing state. The society was steeped in social evils. Most of these evils were centered on women and their position was most distressing. The birth of a girl was unwelcome, her marriage a burden and her widowhood inauspicious. Female infanticide was a common practice. Those who escaped this initial brutality had to face the prospect of child marriage and in many cases lifelong widowhood. In many of the higher castes when their husbands died the women were expected to commit 'Sati' which Raja Ram Mohan Roy described as murder according to every 'Shastra'. If they succeeded in overcoming this social coercion, they were condemned, as widows, to life-long misery, neglect and humiliation. Polygamy was another practice which held the women in bondage for lifetime. An eighty-year old Brahman in Bengal had as many as two hundred wives, the youngest being just eight years old. This practice in Bengal, known as 'Kulinism' was the worst type of polygamous practice that degenerated womanhood beyond redemption.

Caste system was another social factor that had debilitating effect on society. The caste system sought to maintain a system of segregation, hierarchically ordained on the basis of ritual status. The rules and regulations of caste checked social mobility, promoted social division and nipped individual initiative. Besides the humiliation of untouchability was an integral part of the caste system that undermined the human dignity.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1) What were the factors that led to the rise of the Socio-Religious reform Movements?

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## 7.2 RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY AND THE BRAHMO SAMAJ:-

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) has been rightly called as the 'father of Hindu reform movement of the nineteenth century'. He took the first step in the march from the medieval to the modern age

in India. He represented the new spirit of India with its thirst for science and love for rationalism, reform and broad humanism. He was a remarkable man, who would have distinguished himself in any age. The achievements of Raja Ram Mohan Roy seem the more important when one considers that he was born and brought up in the last quarter of the eighteenth century which was one of the darkest periods in Indian history, not only politically and economically but morally and spiritually as well. He was the first leader of India to rouse the consciousness of his fellow-countrymen. With the foundation of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy initiated the socio-religious movement in India. He not only attempted to rationalize the Hindu religion but also promoted social reform, western education, journalism and the freedom of the press and political and administrative reforms.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born in an orthodox Brahmin family. At an early age he was placed in charge of a Maulavi to learn Persian as knowledge of Persian was then essential for attaining success and social status. Later he was sent to Patna to study Arabic. Soon Raja Ram Mohan Roy became familiar with the works of Sufi poets and thus became critical of idolatry and polytheism. At the age fourteen he went to Banaras to learn Sanskrit. Knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to study the Vedanta and the Upanishads. This made him still more critical of idolatry.

After his return from Banaras Raja Ram Mohan Roy wrote a book condemning idolatry. This led to a rupture between him and his conservative father. Leaving home he went as far as Tibet where he studied Buddhism. But the crude form in which the tenets of Buddhism were taught repelled him and he criticized them. This antagonized the Lamas who threatened Raja Ram Mohan Roy with physical violence. However, he was saved by a kind-hearted lady. Since then Raja Ram Mohan Roy became an ardent supporter of women's cause.

After sometime Raja Ram Mohan Roy returned home and was reconciled with his father, but renewed his attacks on idolatry and orthodox Brahmins. Soon thereafter his elder brother died and his widow immolated herself on the funeral pyre and became a 'Sati'. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was greatly shocked and distressed and decided to start a crusade against the cruel practice of 'Sati'.

Till this stage Raja Ram Mohan Roy had no contact with the English language and western nationalism and liberalism. The sources of his religious or spiritual awakening are to be found in his study of the Hindu and Muslim scriptures. In 1796 he began learning English. In about four or five years Raja Ram Mohan Roy acquired enough knowledge and mastery over the English knowledge. He also studied Hebrew, Greek and Latin and acquired

a knowledge of the 'Old and New Testament' in their original languages.

In his early youth Raja Ram Mohan Roy was said to have had a great dislike for the British. However, after a favourable experience in the East India Company, and close contact with worthy Englishmen like Digby, he began to alter his opinion.

Following the death of his father in 1803, Raja Ram Mohan Roy moved to Murshidabad in Bengal. In 1804 he published a pamphlet in Persian called 'Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin' (A Gift to the Monotheists). In this pamphlet Raja Ram Mohan Roy expressed his very strong views against idolatry and polytheism and tried to lay a common foundation of a universal religion based on the doctrine of the Unity of Godhead. After relinquishing his service of the East India Company in 1814, Raja Ram Mohan Roy settled down in Calcutta and established in 1815 a society called the 'Atmiya Sabha' (Society of Friends). The Atmiya Sabha held weekly meetings for propagating the monotheistic doctrines of the Hindu scriptures. In 1825, he established the Vedanta College for teaching the monotheistic doctrines of the Vedanta. He had already attracted public attention by publishing in English a statement of his own views on religion a book called 'Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedanta, or the Resolution of all the Vedas' (1816). In 1820, Raja Ram Mohan Roy published another book entitled 'Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness', embodying the moral and spiritual precepts of Jesus. However, he rejected the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy had to wage a war on two fronts, against the Christian Missionaries and against the orthodox Hindus. He sought to defend Hinduism by reinterpreting it and also by purifying it. He did not reject the spirit of the West nor did he succumb to it, but he used it as a stimulus for discovering the latent humanitarian traditions of Hinduism. The contact of Christianity and western science with Hinduism and an ancient civilization was bound to give rise to conflict and tension. In the past Hinduism had faced challenges first from Buddhism and then from Islam. Confronted with the dynamic and egalitarian message of Islam, Kabir and Nanak had defended Hinduism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by incorporating all that could be taken from the spirit of Islam. Raja Ram Mohan Roy did in the nineteenth century what Kabir and Nanak did in their times.

Like the Christian Missionaries, Raja Ram Mohan Roy attacked polytheism and idolatry. He pointed out that polytheism and idolatry were completely antagonistic to the monotheistic spirit of the Upanishads. He found that most orthodox Hindus could not justify the idolatry they practiced. To emphasize the fact that

idolatry was not sanctioned by the highest religion Raja Ram Mohan Roy went back to the Vedas.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy's activities were not confined to controversial discussion of the different religions. He was equally interested in education and social reform. He was one of the many Indians who took an active part in the establishment of the Hindu College at Calcutta (1819). He persuaded the government to promote not the old Sanskrit system of learning but a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy ... and other useful sciences.'

Raja Ram Mohan Roy's efforts towards social reform were equally fruitful. In 1818 he began his crusade for the abolition of the cruel practice of 'Sati'. It was chiefly due to the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, abolished the practice of 'Sati' by an order of the Government on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1829. In cooperating with foreign rulers to enact socially progressive legislation Raja Ram Mohan Roy became the forerunner of later social reformers such as Ranade and Gokhale.

In 1821 Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded a Bengali journal, the 'Samvad Kaumudi' to propagate his ideas of socio-religious reforms. He agitated against the Press Regulations of 1823. As a result of such agitation the Press was freed by Sir Charles Metcalfe, the acting Governor General in 1835.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy deplored the inequities of the caste system. He was of the opinion that the division and sub-divisions of caste deprived the people of political feelings. He had a passion for justice in social as well as economic matters. He was against feudal system and had a keen perception of the economic abuses arising from the introduction of the permanent settlement by Lord Cornwallis. He pleaded the cause of the poor tenants, who were exposed to the greed of the Zamindars.

Though Raja Ram Mohan Roy's social reforms were manifold and of great importance, it was in religion that his contribution had the most far reaching effect. In 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj, a theistic society opposed to polytheism, mythology and idolatry. The Brahmo Samaj was initially conceived by Raja Ram Mohan Roy as a universalistic church. He was a defender of the basic and universal principles of all religions the monotheism of the Vedas and the Unitarianism of Christianity and at the same time attacked polytheism of Hinduism and Trinitarianism of Christianity.

Throughout the long history of the Brahmo Samaj it remained theistic and opposed to idolatry and always advocated progressive social reforms. While its roots have been grounded deep in the Hindu religion, Raja Ram Mohan Roy as well as the early founders of the Brahmo Samaj, derived inspiration and stimulus from keen intellectual controversies with the Christian missionaries. Infact the impulse which proved more creative in Raja Ram Mohan Roy's mind was the desire to found a form of religion capable of meeting the missionaries attacks on Hinduism in a manner which would conform to the scientific spirit of the age.

After the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bristol, England on 27 September 1833, Dwarkanath Tagore gave some financial support to the Samaj. However, he could not provide it a significant spiritual leadership. Such leadership was given later by his son Debendranath Tagore. Debendranath attracted many enlightened Hindus to the Brahmo Samaj. He and his friend Akshay Kumar Datta, the editor of the 'Tatva Bodhini Patrika' did much to check the conversion of Hindus to Christianity. The 'Tatva Bodhini Patrika' proclaimed the Vedas as the basis of faith of the Brahmo Samaj. Though Debendranath rejected idolatry, in matters of social reforms he wished to proceed slowly. But this cautious approach brought him into conflict with one of his radical disciple, Keshab Chandra Sen.

### Check Your Progress

Q.2) Why was the Brahmo Samaj founded? What were its principles? In what way did it stimulate the rise of Indian Nationalism?

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### 7.3 THE PRARTHANA SAMAJ :-

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Under Keshab Chandra Sen the Brahmo Samaj movement spread outside Bengal. His tour of the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras made the Brahmo Samaj something like an all-India movement. In Maharashtra the reformers desired to have an organization similar to that of the Brahmo Samaj. In 1867, the Prarthana Samaj was founded by Atmaram Pandurang. R.G. Bhandarkar and M.G. Ranade, who were its prominent members. However, it is important to note that unlike the followers of the

Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, the followers of the Prarthana Samaj did not look upon themselves as adherents of a new religion or of a new sect outside and along side of the general Hindu body, but simply as movement within it. The Prarthana Samajists were staunch Theists in the Vaishnava tradition of Maharashtra made popular by saints such as Tukaram and Ramdas.

The members of the Prarthana Samaj promoted social reforms such as promoting interdining and inter-caste marriages among different castes, improvement of the status of women and depressed classes. The Prarthana Samaj founded an Orphanage at Pandharpur. It also established night schools for the promotion of education among the different sections of the Hindu society. Widows Home and Depressed Classes Mission were the other important institutions founded by Prarthana Samaj. It had been the centre of many activities of social reform in Western India.

Justice M.G. Ranade was one of the most active members of the Prarthana Samaj. He was not only a social reformer but also an historian, economist, educationist and nationalist. He was closely associated with many social and educational institutions. He was one of the founder members of the Widow Marriage Association in 1861. The Deccan Education Society was founded under his guidance. He began the practice of holding a Social Conference along with the annual session of the Indian National Congress. He was also a founder member of the Indian National Congress. One of the outstanding women of modern India, Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922) rendered great service to the Prarthana Samaj. She dedicated herself for the cause of the emancipation of women. It was chiefly due to her untiring zeal and dedication that the Prarthana Samaj established the Arya Mahila Sabha.

The activities of the Prarthana Samaj were regional in character. As it did not have definite, well defined principles, the Samaj could not launch a nationwide movement. Its activities were restricted to Maharashtra. Its leaders were men of moderate views and were opposed to radical reforms.

### Check Your Progress

Q.3) Bring out the achievements of the Prarthana Samaj.

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## 7.4 THE ARYA SAMAJ :

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The Arya Samaj, founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, was more conservative and aggressive than the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj were largely products of ideas associated with the West and represented Indian response to Western rationalism. They were inspired by western learning and western religions. Whereas the reform movement initiated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati was inspired by India's past and derived its basic principles from India's ancient scriptures and religion, especially those of the Vedic Age.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati whose original name was Mul Shankar name from conservative Gujarat. He was not touched by western learning or thought, neither was he influenced by the monotheistic religions, Christianity and Islam. He was of the opinion that the Hindus' required no new religious knowledge and no external spiritual aid. He insisted that they should rely on the Vedas-alone. As he studied the Vedas deeper, Dayananda was convinced that the Vedas-were the source of all truth and supreme knowledge. It was in the Vedas that he found the doctrine of Monotheism and devotion to one formless God. He regarded the Vedas infallible and eternal. in a book entitled 'Satyarth Prakash', Swami Dayananda Saraswati laid down his own interpretation of the Vedas. He disregarded the authority of the later scriptures such as the Puranas and Epics.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati insisted that the Vedic religion alone was true religion and eagerly looked forward to the day when the religion of the Vedas would become the religion of the whole human race. According to Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the Vedic society as the Vedic religion was natural and pure without any social evils of the later ages. The Vedas had advocated only the fourfold natural division of the society according to the character, capability and, preference of the individuals for their professional. Thus there was neither caste system nor untouchability in the Vedic society. In the same way the women during the Vedic age had honourable status in the society. Being convinced of the values of the Vedic religion and society, Swami Dayananda adopted the motto 'Back to the Vedas'.

At a time when many Indians suffered from the inferiority complex compared to the Englishmen, Swami Dayananda asserted that of least in the field of religion and philosophy the best modern European thought did not come up to the level of the best ancient Hindu thought.

Though Swami Dayananda was a revivalist in matters of religion, he was a reformer in social matters. He denounced the

system and the evil of untouchability. He also attacked polytheism and idolatry as being inconsistent with the teachings of the Vedas. He was also a strong advocate of the emancipation of women from the degrading social evils.

Swami Dayananda lost faith in image worship at an early age due to an incident on a Shivaratri day. He found it impossible to reconcile the idea of an omnipotent, living God with idol which allowed the mice to run upon its body, and thus suffered his image to be polluted without the slightest protest. Doubts about the virtues of idol worship and death of his sister and uncle made Dayananda to realize the unreality of life and he decided to take to religion. For fifteen years, from 1845 to 1860 he travelled everywhere to find a guru and in search of knowledge. He met many Sadhus in different parts of the country but few impressed him. Then in 1860 he discovered Swami Virajananda, who was blind from infancy but who was a man of great learning and piety. Virajananda hated idol worship. He told Dayananda that people did not know the right from the wrong they wrangled about castes and creeds and neglected the study of the Vedas. He impressed upon Dayananda that he should rely only on the Sanskrit literature of the Pre-Mahabharatan period and not to consider the post-Mahabharatan literature written by prejudiced and narrow-minded men'

Being influenced by the teachings of Swami Virajananda, Dayananda strongly took his stand on the Veda. He denounced superstition, caste, untouchability, child marriage, forced widowhood, neglect of women's education and ban on foreign travel. Apparently in matter of social reform Dayananda was more radical than even many English-educated Indians.

In order to propagate his teachings about the religion and social reform, Swami Dayananda Saraswati founded the first Arya Samaj in Bombay in 1875 and another in Lahore in 1877. Branches of the Samaj were established in many places in northern India. A number of ruling chiefs became Swami Dayananda's followers. But the concubine of a Maharaja, whom Swami Dayananda had criticized, is suspected to have poisoned him which resulted in his death. Swami Dayananda Saraswati believed in one God and relied on the Vedas as his authority. He was not in favour of establishing a new religion. The religion he sought to preach was fully contained in the Vedas. He believed that truth was God.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati criticized Christianity as well as Islam. In order to counteract the proselytizing activities of the Christian and Muslim missionaries, Swami Dayananda Saraswati initiated the 'Shuddhi' movement for the reconversion of the former Hindus who had been willingly or forcibly converted to Christianity or Islam. The importance of this movement can be understood from



the fact that for ages Hinduism had debarred the reentry of those who adopted alien faiths for one reason or the other. In this way the Arya Samaj became a defensive organization.

In all its activities, the Arya Samaj was inspired by the spirit of nationalism and democracy. It attempted to bring about an integration of the Hindu society by destroying the caste system. Through education it tried to promote the principle of equality irrespective of the distinction of caste, creed, community, race or sex. It organized a network of schools and colleges for boys and girls. The Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College was founded in 1886. To encourage ancient Aryan type of education, the Arya Samaj founded a number of Gurukulas. The most important of such Gurukulas was one at Kangri near Haridwar, which developed into a famous centre of Vedic studies. Sanskrit and Hindi were used as the medium of instruction.

While upholding the Vedic religion and society and criticizing Christianity and Islam, Swami Dayananda Saraswati did not spare his countrymen for their manifold defects. He traced the decline of India and loss of political independence to those defects. Meanwhile he reminded the Indians that the British ruled India because they had many good qualities. He emphasized that Indians could not rise as a nation unless they radically transformed their social system. He opposed child marriage and recommended 25 and 18 years as minimum marriageable age for boys and girls respectively. He supported widow remarriage and female education. He also attacked the inequities of the caste system and stated that a Shudra who was as accomplished as a Brahmin should be treated as a Brahmin and he claimed that a Shudra was in fact so treated in the Vedic age.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati spoke of 'swaraj' and believed in 'Swadeshi'. He wanted the people to use indigenous and not foreign goods. Believing in everything indigenous, including the government, he declared, the indigenous native rule is by far the best' He also favoured representative government and was not in favour of any single individual to have absolute power. The king as also the assembly should be accountable to the people, but the best men should be elected Swami Dayananda Saraswati was of the opinion that learned men should be elected to the Educational Assembly, devout men to the Religious Assembly and men of character to the Legislative Assembly or Political Assembly. He believed that India should have Hindi as the national language.

The Arya Samaj represented a form of national awakening of the Indian people. Many Arya Samajists, such as Lala Lajpat Rai and Munshi Ram actively participated in the national movement. Lala Lajpat Rai, an extremist leader joined the Arya Samaj in 1882.

This was a turning point in his life. Later he wrote, 'It was the Arya Samaj that instilled into me love for my nation and that breathed into me the spirit of liberty'. The teaching of Swami Dayananda Saraswati and the Arya Samaj stimulated the pride of Indians in their tradition and culture. The strengthening of the spirit of political nationalism.

### Check Your Progress

Q.4) Highlight the contribution of Swami Dayananda Saraswati and the Arya Samaj towards the rise of Indian nationalism.

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## 7.5 THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION :

An important religious movement that emerged in the nineteenth century was the Ramakrishna Mission movement. It was named after Ramakrishna Paramahansa, a priest in the temple of Kali at Dakshineswar. Ramakrishna (1836-86) was born in a highly orthodox Brahmin family in a small village in the Hoogly district of Bengal. He did not have any formal education. Even as a child he had mystic vision. Ramakrishna tried to understand and practice not only the religious tenets of Hinduism but also those of Islam and Christianity. He went to Muslim and Christian mystics and lived with them for years. Ultimately he came to the conclusion that Krishna, Allah and Jesus were but different names of God, and that the practice of all religions would lead to the same goal.

Ramakrishna was a devotee of Kali, the Divine Mother, the image of Kali was much more than a mere idol of stone. He felt that the image was Goddess herself. He completely lost himself in the worship of Kali, whom he considered as the Mother of the entire universe.

Ramakrishna was a simple man with no western education-However, many highly educated, skeptical and westernized Indians mostly from Calcutta came to him and found faith, serenity and strength that they lacked. Keshab Chandra Sen, the Brahmo leader often visited Ramakrishna. Among the visitors who became the most famous of his disciples was a young graduate of the Calcutta University named Narendra Nath Dutt, later popularly known as Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902).

Swami Vivekananda had a western style of education. He had planned to study law in England but his religious instinct led him from one religious teacher to another. After his contact with Ramakrishna, Vivekananda found the former to be the true man of renunciation who had given up everything for God. Ramakrishna discovered Vivekananda's genius at an early stage.

After the death of Ramakrishna in August 1886, Vivekananda took charge of his disciples at the Baranagore ashram. However, in 1888 he took up the life of wandering monk and travelled throughout the country. He carried with him only the Gita and Thomas A. Kempis 'Imitation of Christ'. For nearly five years he travelled to different parts of the country, mostly on foot.

In 1893, Swami Vivekananda attended the famous 'Parliament of Religions' at Chicago, U.S.A. He electrified the world by his address at this congregation, by his directness, simplicity and brilliant eloquence. The 'New York Herald' wrote that Vivekananda was undoubtedly, the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation'. He gave a number of discourses in America and Europe for about four years and then returned to India as a national hero.

Swami Vivekananda admired Americans for their vitality and for scientific and technological progress they had achieved. However, he felt that economic considerations dominated the American way of life. During his journey through America and Europe, Vivekananda was greatly impressed by the power, the organization and the democratic point of the West. Like Keshab Chandra Sen, Vivekananda believed that whereas the West needed the spirituality of India, India needed the science of the West. Swami Vivekananda defended the image worship, but described it as the lowest form of worship. He wanted to transform the rigid caste system into a flexible system based on merit. He also denounced the evil of untouchability. Though he spoke about the need for social reform, he would not tolerate any attack on Indian institution merely because the westerners disapproved of them. He wanted to educate the masses and believed that with education and the spread of spirituality, social reform will come as a matter of course.

After his return from abroad, Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission on 5 May 1897, which was to be more than a mere religious organization. Its main objectives were - (1) to propagate the teachings of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. (2) To spread the meaning of Vedantic spiritualism far and wide. (3) To strive for a synthesis and harmony among various faiths. (4) To regard the service of man as the service of God.

Swami Vivekananda was greatly impressed by the work of various organizations of the West which were engaged in social service. He advised his disciples not to seek merely personal salvation but to engage in socially beneficial activities. He bashed out against mere religiosity and contemplative idleness. He preached his gospel of activism and social service.

Vivekananda was a revivalist and cultural nationalist, yet he asked his countrymen to come in contact with the culture of the West. He said that one important cause of the degeneration of the Hindus believed that they could do without the world they refused to travel to foreign countries.

The Ramakrishna Mission with a number of branches within the country as well as abroad adopted the idea of social service as an essential discipline for religious and spiritual life. Its famine relief work in Murshidabad in 1897 and the relief organized during the outbreak of plague in Calcutta in 1898-99 form great landmarks in the relief activities of the Mission. The Mission has also opened many schools, colleges, orphanages, dispensaries and hospitals. It always helped the poor in times of distress caused by famines, floods and other natural calamities.

The Ramakrishna Mission is a world organization doing its splendid work of interpreting to man everywhere the spiritual and cultural heritage of India and rendering various other humanitarian services.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.5) Write a detailed note on Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission.

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## **7.6 THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY:**

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The Theosophical Society, like the Arya Samaj stimulated the spirit of cultural nationalism among the Indians. The Theosophical Society was founded by Madame Blavatsky, a Russian and Colonel Olcott an American in New York (U.S.A) on 17 November 1875. Both the founders of the Theosophical Society

repudiated Christianity and both of them were converted to Buddhism.

Colonel Olcott emphasized on the majesty and sufficiency of eastern scriptures and appealed to the sentiments of patriotic loyalty of Indians to uphold the religion of their forefathers. He also pleaded for the revival of Sanskrit learning and of the ancient philosophy, drama, music, and literature of the Hindus.

Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott came to India in 1879 and transferred the headquarters of the Theosophical Society to Adyar, near Madras. Gradually, branches of the society were established in different parts of India. The chief aims of the Theosophical Society were - (1) To form a nucleus of universal brotherhood. (2) To encourage the study of comparative religions, philosophies and sciences. (3) To investigate the complex and unexplained laws of nature and the power hidden in man. (4) To strive for women's welfare, upliftment of depressed classes and the promotion of 'Swadeshi'.

Theosophists were of the opinion that promotion of a spirit of brotherhood at all levels, international, national, inter-religious, inter-communal and individual is the answer to many problems of the world.

The most important propagator of Theosophical movement in India was Annie Besant, an Irish lady. She renounced Christianity and came under the influence of Theosophy. She joined the Theosophical Society in 1889. After the death of Madame Blavatsky in 1891, Annie Besant took over the leadership of the society and came to India two years later. She guided the society for nearly fifty years and infused a new life into the Theosophical movement and attracted many Indians towards the society.

Annie Besant considered the aim of the Theosophical Society to be the founding of a Universal Brotherhood without distinction of race or creed, the study of Aryan literature and philosophy. The founders of the society did not believe in a personal God, but a subtle form of pantheism was taught. Annie Besant sought to defend Hinduism against the attack of Christian missionaries and against the critics of those English educated social reformers.

Following her advent to India, Annie Besant worked for about twenty years in religious, educational and social fields. She translated the Bhagvad Gita into English and became a pillar of Hindu revivalism. She, however, condemned early marriage and forced widowhood. She was also associated with the founding of

the Central Hindu College at Banaras in 1898, which later in 1916 became the famous Banaras Hindu University under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya.

Though initially she championed the Hindu social system, with the passage of years Annie Besant's views changed. In 1904 she declared that reforms were needed in Hindu society. However, she emphasized that reform meant a resurgence of purified Hinduism. In order to reform Hindu society Annie Besant first worked for the development of a flexible caste system in place of the existing rigid caste system. But later she was convinced that more radical reforms were required and in 1913 she declared that the caste system had outlived its utility and that it must go.

Annie Besant sympathized with the aspirations of Indian people for freedom and joined the national movement. She herself helped in the promulgation of nationalism in India through two journals, the 'Commonweal', a weekly and the 'New India' a daily which were started in 1914. She promoted the cause of Home Rule for India in these journals. Her services to the national cause were appropriately recognized and she was elected as the president of the Congress session in 1917. However, Annie Besant's association with the Congress turned out to be short-lived. She did not approve the programme of non-cooperation adopted by the Congress on the suggestion of Gandhi and thus, severed connection with the organization in 1921.

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## 7.7 SUMMARY:

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From the above observations it becomes clear that the socio-religious reform movements form an integral part of the evolution of national consciousness in India. These reform movements either inspired by the western religions and rationalism or ancient Indian religio-cultural traditions aimed at democratization of the society and nationalization of religious beliefs and practices. In doing so these movements along with reforming the society attempted to instill a sense of self-respect and pride among the people and made them to realize the need to be free from an alien domination.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1) Write a detailed note on Annie Besant and the Theosophical Society.

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**7.8 QUESTIONS:**

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1. Examine the various factors and circumstances that Led to the rise and growth of the socio religious reform movement in India.
2. Assess the life and career of RajaRam Mohan Roy.
3. Trace the career and achievement of Dayanand Saraswati.
4. Give an account of the life and achievement of Swami Vivekananda.

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**7.9 ADDITIONAL READINGS:**

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1. Aravind Gansachar, Nationalism and Social reforms in a Colonial situations.
2. Chales Heimsath, Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform.
3. Parekh Bhika, colonialism, Tradition and Reform.
4. Bimal Malhotra, Reform, Reaction and Nationalism in western India.



## RISE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

### B1) British Economic Policies and their Impacts

#### UNIT STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Influence on the small scale industries.
- 8.3 The effects of the British rule in India.
- 8.4 Destructive role of British rule.
- 8.5 Destructive role of British government in India.
- 8.6 Concentration of trade in big cities.
- 8.7 Introduction of railways.
- 8.8 Adverse effects of railways in India.
- 8.9 Famines.
- 8.10 Causes of famines.
- 8.11 Famine commission.
- 8.12 Summary
- 8.13 Questions
- 8.14 Additional Reading

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#### 8.0 OBJECTIVES:

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After reading, this Unit the student will be able to: –

- Know the economic system in India on the eve of the British rule in India.
- Understand the British rule and their economic policies in India.
- Explain about the small scale industries in India.
- Comprehend the destructive role of the British rule in India.
- Understand the adverse effects of the introduction of railways in India.



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## 8.1 INTRODUCTION:

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Ancient India was a rich and prosperous country. It had been nicknamed as the 'Golden Sparrow'. Wealth of India was considered to be abundant. The standard of living of Indians was very high. Foreign travelers to India frequently reported a general prosperity. India had achieved a high industrial development. India's industrial skill was admired everywhere. Even Roman Empire used to purchase large quantities of Indian luxury fabrics. Romans used to pay India in gold and silver for these commodities. At one time the muslin of Dacca, the beautiful woollen shawls of Kashmir, the fine linens, calicos and the brocades of Delhi were famous throughout the World. India had a well-developed metal industry also. The famous iron pillar at Delhi is a standing testimony to it. The ship building industry was also in a prosperous state. In addition, a number of handicrafts flourished both in the rural and in the urban areas. The Britishers ruled over India for about 200 years. During this period, a policy of systematic exploitation and loot of the Indian economy was followed. As a result, the old economic organization of India broke down, industrial structure collapsed, burden on agriculture mounted, and hence the poverty increased.

### **Economic System of India during the British Regime:**

The East India Company was established in India as a commercial unit. The aim of this Company was to develop trade relations with the eastern countries. The Directors of the company made a serious study of the political condition of India. The process of political disintegration began in India rapidly after the decline of the Mughals. The English took advantage of this situation and besides establishing their trade in India they got an opportunity to take over its administration in their hands. Bengal was the first province where the English established their control in the beginning. Afterwards, the British government went on increasing its influence gradually in most parts of the country. In this way, the East India Company besides being a commercial institution also became a political power.

Even then, there is no denying the fact that the English came over to India as traders and continued to be so to the last. They were interested in administration only because they thought that the economic resources of the country were rich enough for commercial development. They were not at all interested in the development of India rather they wanted to utilize its resources in their own interest. Thus, the chief characteristic of the British regime was the economic exploitation of India resulting in poverty for the Indians. The British in order to strengthen their economic system spoiled the traditional economic structure of India and did

not give an opportunity to the country to develop her own new economic system based on her resources.

Thus, the entire economic system of India was exploited during the British regime, and some revolutionary changes took place in the field of agriculture, trade, commerce and handicrafts.

Influence on Agriculture

### **India is chiefly an agricultural country**

From the very beginning, agriculture has been considered to be the very base of its economic system. The British Government made some changes in the agricultural setup of the country, because of which, India's economic system was affected immensely. The English policy affected Indian agriculture in the following ways –

- 1) The British Government had introduced Zamindari system in order to realize the land revenue in the Indian provinces. With the development of this policy, the land of the real owners began to be divided among the moneylenders, wealthy persons, rich merchants and other influential persons. Taking advantage of the illiteracy and poverty of the village folks, some ambitious and rich persons conspired with the revenue officers and took illegal possession of the land of the poor and ignorant villagers. They took recourse to committing forgery in the revenue records and became the owners of the lands so far possessed by the poor farmers. They did not do this for the development of agriculture but just to establish their control over land and amass money.
- 2) The evil result of transfer of lands soon became evident when the landlords started giving their lands on higher revenue and tried to realize the maximum tax from the peasants. If the payment of the revenue was not made in time, the landlord had the right to alienate the peasant from the right to cultivation of that particular piece of land.
- 3) The Zamindari system adversely affected the rural economic structure. The productivity of the cultivable land began to decrease gradually because the landlords did not pay attention towards the fertility of the land. They only wanted to extract more and more money by giving the piece of land to the highest bidder hence the equilibrium of the rural economic system broke down. The landlords went on becoming richer and the farmers had to fight against poverty to keep their body and soul together. As a result, a great gulf was created between the poor and the rich, which could not be abridged and gave birth to social tension and class struggle.

- 4) As the balance of economic system was disturbed, the rural people fell victims to heavy debts. The farmers had to take loans on high rates of interest for seeds, manures, irrigation and other agricultural purposes. The autocratic and dictatorial attitude of the moneylenders made the position of the farmers all the worse and they were forced to lead a deplorable life, at the mercy of these local exploiters.
- 5) The transfer of land from the real owners to the moneylenders and the merchants proved fatal for the peace and order of the society. Various dissatisfied landowners who were deprived of their ancestral lands, took law and order in their hands and created chaos and confusion in the society. Litigations began between the cultivators and the landlords. All these demerits totally undermined the rural economic structure.

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## **8.2 INFLUENCE ON THE SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES:**

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The other drawback of the administrative system was that it destroyed the small-scale industries. At that time, the Indian small-scale industry contributed a lot to the economic system of the country. Its following effects need special mention here –

- 1) The small-scale industry of India was the pillar of its foreign trade and prosperity. As soon as the Company established its political supremacy in Bengal, it began to exploit the artisans of cotton and silk cloth. As a result, the cloth trade did not remain a source of profit for the artisans and the cloth industry of Bengal disintegrated.
- 2) According to the Charter Act of 1813, the English merchants were permitted to establish their trade relations in India, hence the number of exploiters multiplied, which ruined the economic structure of the country.
- 3) England imposed heavy duty on the goods to be exported from India. It patronized the British industry. On the other hand, the government of India imposed light duty on the goods imported into India so that these could be sold in the Indian market easily. Thus, it affected the Indian trade and industry from both sides and resulted in the ruin of trade and industry.
- 4) In 1833, the Indian Government declared the policy of free trade, which destroyed the small-scale industry completely. Because of tax-free trade, the British began to get the raw materials at a very low price and as such, the goods manufactured in the British factories began to be sold cheaply in the Indian market. The Indian goods being costly could be sold in the market hence the small-scale industry was almost ruined.

**5) Influence on Big Industries** - The British administrative policy affected the big industries in the following ways –

- a) The development of the big industries was quite slow in the country.
- b) The Indian industrialists were not provided with any help by the government.
- c) The lack of fundamental industries did not permit the industrial development in India. For example, the production of steel began in India in the year 1913.
- d) The Indian industries were established in some exclusive parts of the country, which contributed to further regional economic inequality.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1) Point out the changes, which occurred in Indian agriculture under the British rule.

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## **8.3 THE EFFECTS OF THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA:**

There was a positive aspect to the British rule in India, inspite of the fact that the Britishers had always been prompted by their narrow interest. The Britishers fulfilled the role of as Karl Marx the 'Father of Communism' puts it, 'the unconscious tool of history' in the political, social and economic development of India.

The Britishers did the following favours to the Indian society -

- a) by destroying, the old social order, the Britishers laid down the material basis for a new social order. The new social order is it precondition for economic growth.
- b) The new social order helped break the rigidities of the caste system.
- c) The Anglicised education was imposed. It opened the avenues to the great stream of English democratic and popular inspiration. It laid the seeds of Indian Nationalism and found expression in such movements as Swadeshi.

- d) The Britishers introduced the railway system and a vast network of transportation and communications. These became the forerunner of the industrial development of India.
- e) Above all, the political and economic unification of the country was achieved for the first time under British rule.
- f) The Britishers developed the most modern and efficient system of communication. The first telegraph line was operated in 1853 between Calcutta and Agra. The first postage stamp was released in 1852. Adequate improvements were made in the postal service. They made it possible to avail postal facility at a uniform rate throughout the country. Development of the post and telegraphs helped the integration of the different regions and accelerated the process of economic growth by facilitating the development of trade, commerce and industry.

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#### **8.4 DESTRUCTIVE ROLE OF BRITISH RULE:**

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It is for its destructive role that the British rule in India is remembered. The destructive role of the British rule can be put under the following heads -

- a) **Decay of Indigenous Industries** - Before the British rule India had a well-organized industry. With the arrival of the British, Indian industry began to decline. The process of decline began as early as the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. It became very steep towards the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Following causes were responsible for the decline -
  - 1. **The disappearance of the Native Indian Courts** - Urban organized industry in India produced chiefly luxury and semi-luxury articles. Aristocrats generally purchased these. Aristocracy consisted of Native Rajas, Nawabs and their Courtiers. With the establishment of the British rule in India, native rulers began to disappear. Their courtiers and officials were thrown into the background. Their disappearance meant the closure of the main source of demand for the products of these industries. The abolition of the courts meant that the fine articles which were in demand by the nobles for state occasions were no longer required. Hence began the decline of so many handicrafts and art.
  - 2. **Lack of patronage from the new upper class** - As the old aristocracy and courts vanished, their position was now occupied in the towns by two classes - the European Officials and the new Educated Class. The European officials and the European tourists demanded the local products merely as souvenirs and curios. As such, they wanted goods at cheap

prices. The demand tended to lower the artistic value of the goods produced. In many cases, artisans were forced to copy European designs and patterns. They worked hard to satisfy their customers. The products occasionally were bad copies of the originals.

The new class of educated Indians was proud to copy European fashions. They hated every thing Indian. They blindly imitated the western ways to please their masters. Apart from this slavish mentality sometimes some unwritten rule or convention also forced these Indians to behave like that. Thus the decay of the embroidered shoe industry was brought about by a strange convention. This convention permitted an Indian to retain a pair of leather shoes on slacking feet only. It also required him to put off shoes of native make when in the presence of a superior. Lack of patronage and demand for this new class accelerated the decline of indigenous industries.

**3. Weakening of the Guilds** - The British rule affected handicrafts in another way also. Urban artisans and craftsmen were organized in the form of guilds. The guilds supervised the quality of the products. They also regulated the trade. With the entry of British traders, these guilds lost their power. As soon as supervising bodies were removed, many evils began to appear. These were, for example, the adulteration of materials, shady and poor workmanship etc. This at once led to a decline in the artistic and commercial value of the goods produced.

**4. Competition with machine made goods** - The competition from the European manufacturers was responsible for the decline of the local industry. The construction of roads and railways made it possible to distribute the goods to every nook and corner of the country. Opening of the Suez Canal reduced the physical distance between England and India. English goods in large quantities were sent for sale in India. Among these goods textiles was the most important item. The quality of these clothes was definitely poor as compared to Indian clothes. However, they were cheap. They were within the reach even of the poor man. Hence, these imported clothes and other machine made goods came to be demanded in large quantities. Local handicraft lost their demand.

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## **8.5 DESTRUCTIVE ROLE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN INDIA:**

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The British Government in India was more interested in the development of industries at the home. Thus Government sacrificed all the interests of the local industries. The policies

adopted by the Government were very harmful for indigenous industries. For example, British goods were allowed to come to India without any duty or barrier. On the other, hand Indian exports of manufactured goods had to pay heavy customs duties. An unfair competition was result. Many such instances of the British policy can be quoted. The simple consequence of this policy was that Indian industries suffered. Ultimately many of them closed down for good. Such was the fate of Indian industries at that time. It looks very ironical. Just imagine the following situation. Industrial Revolution was booming in England and other western countries. It was the same Western countries, which were considered backward in relation to India. However, simultaneously in the rich India industries began to decline. In other words process of 'deindustrialization' of India began. The industrial labour was rendered unemployed. It began to tall back upon agriculture. It increased the pressure on land. Land was divided and subdivided into smallholdings. Agricultural productivity fell down and agriculture thus became a backward industry. This process of decline continued till the end of First World War. After the War the Britishers realized the significance of a developed industrial economy in India from the military point of view. A developed industry in India could have easily helped them keep running the supply lines during the War. However, by then great harm had already been done to the indigenous industry.

- a) **Decay of old towns and Growth of new cities** - Another impact of the British rule in India was the movement of population from the old towns to the new trading centres. These trading centres were situated in the cities. Thus many new cities developed. However, at the same time, many important towns began to decay. Among these important towns were Mirzapur, Murshidabad, Malda, Santipore, Tanjore, Amritsar, Dacca etc. Among the important cities that developed were Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Nagpur Karpura and Karachi, Lahore (now in Pakistan) Chittagong (Bangladesh), Rangoon (Burma) etc. These cities grew in importance as great commercial towns.
- b) **The decay of Urban Handicrafts** - The decay of urban handicrafts following the disappearance of the royal courts brought about a decrease in the population of the old Indian towns. As the craftsmen lost their occupations, they turned to agriculture. They shifted to villages.
- c) **Diversion of Trade Routes** - Introduction of railways in India by the Britishers opened up new means of transportation. Some of the old towns were prosperous because they were located on some important trade routes. For example Mirzapur was an important trading centre because of its location on the

River Ganga. With the introduction of railways, old routes and old means of transportation lost their importance. Hence the old towns also began to lose their significance.

- d) Epidemics and Insanitary conditions in old towns** - Most of the old towns had become stagnant. These were vulnerable to diseases. Frequent outbreak of epidemics like plague and cholera was a common feature. Such epidemics took a heavy toll of the urban population. These, therefore, also drove a large population from the urban areas. In this way many old towns lost their importance. However, simultaneously commerce and trade encouraged the growth of new cities.

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## **8.6 CONCENTRATION OF TRADE IN BIG CITIES:**

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The biggest single cause of the rise of big cities is the Concentration of Trade. It means that most of the producers, distributors etc. open offices in big cities. It is because of the fact that big cities offer better marketing facilities to the traders. Traders are attracted to these places from small towns and rural areas. This is what happened during the British rule. The British promoted trade and commerce in our country. This was concentrated only in a few cities. These cities grew in importance.

- a) Higher Wages in big cities** - New and big cities generally offer more job opportunities. With the growth of trade and commerce job opportunities in big cities were increasing. At the same time large number of artisans and craftsmen were being thrown out of their jobs in semi-urban areas. These unemployed artisans, village craftsmen and landless agricultural workers were shifting to big cities in search of jobs. It was because agriculture had already become crowded. Thus big cities attracted large labour force.
- b) Centralization of Administration** - The Britishers adopted a new system of administration. Government offices came to be located in big cities. These places were known as district headquarters. These cities grew at the expense of small towns in the districts. These Government offices were also a good source of jobs. A large part of the urban population came to depend on the government service for their living. It led to the migration of population to these cities. This resulted in growth of cities. In other countries growth of cities was always encouraged by establishment of industries. In India on the other hand influence of industry has been totally lacking. This was because that old industries were dying out at that time, new industries were not coming forth. Growth of trade and commerce was in the interest of the Britishers. Therefore, trade and commerce had more influence on the decay of towns and cities.



**Check Your Progress :**

Q.2) What were the causes of decline of indigenous industries?

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**8.7 INTRODUCTION OF RAILWAYS:**


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- 1. Trade and Military Oriented Network** - India is a vast country. It extends from Kanya Kumari in the South to Kashmir in the North. For such a large country means of transportation and communication play a crucial role. Political, Social and Economic integration of the country depends to a large extent on the availability at cheap and easy means of transportation and communication.

In this sense only, the Britishers made a significant contribution to the economic progress of India. They introduced railways in the country. First railway train ran from Bombay (Mumbai) to Thane a distance of 21 miles on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1853. The advantages of railways from the economic point of view are very clear. Railways have made it possible to fight famines and food scarcities even in distant regions. Growth of trade and commerce always depends on railways. Railways also make it possible to make better use of resources like raw materials etc, lying at different places. They help in the movement of population. The growth of towns, ports developments etc. are possible because of railways.

However, during the British rule railways did not make much headway towards the economic development of the country. As a matter of fact, the Britishers never wanted Railways to act as an agent of economic progress. The motive behind railway construction was never industrial and economic development of the country. The motive was to open up India more completely, so that the far-flung areas should be easily accessible. That would make it easy for the Britishers to exploit the resources of the country in a better way for their own interests. Following reasons explain why the Britishers accepted the scheme of railway construction in India. These throw light on their real motives also.

2. **Transportation of Raw Materials** - Industrial Revolution started in England around the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A number of large industries especially cotton textiles had been established in England. Raw materials supplies fed up the wheels of these industries from English Colonies. India was a rich source of supply of raw cotton to the British industries. Bullock carts carried the raw cotton bales. These carts delivered cotton to big centres. These used to cover long distances. It was submitted by the cotton traders and manufacturers in England that when bullock carts transported cotton dirt used to get mixed with it. The Lancashire textile mills wanted good, clean cotton for their use. Only railway transport could meet their need.
3. **Market for Manufactured Goods** - Another essential requirement of the Industrial Revolution in England was that there must be profitable sources of sale for manufactured goods. England in itself is a small country. Large quantity of manufactured goods could not be sold there. India on the other hand could offer them a very large market. For that it was essential that the country should be opened up. Far-flung areas should be made accessible by easy and cheap means of transportation. Railway served the purpose.
4. **Military Considerations** - The Britishers were a foreign power. They were ruling over India. India is spread far and wide. It was necessary for the Britishers to join different corners of the country. Their strength and power, was often challenged and put to test by the local people in one region or the other. The Britishers had to meet this challenge by mobilizing troops and military stores. No other means of transportation could make fast mobilization possible. Only railways did that.

In short the Britishers had their own selfish interest in construction of railways in India. The military and trade considerations prompted them to do this. They were never interested in industrial and economic needs of India. Same was with the railways also. Railways have contributed much too economic progress especially after independence. We do acknowledge our debt to the Britishers for this gift. However, during the British rule railways contributed more to the destruction of our economy rather than its construction. The adverse effects of railway construction were innumerable.

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## **8.8 ADVERSE EFFECTS OF RAILWAYS IN INDIA:**

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- 1) **Decline of Urban Handicrafts** - One of the most serious consequences of railway construction in India was the decline of urban handicrafts. With the growth of railways, the mills of

Lancashire and Manchester entered in big way in Indian markets. The mill made goods posed a serious challenge to the local handicrafts. These handicrafts could not stand 'Cost Price Warfare'. They ultimately decayed out.

- 2) Growth of Colonial Character of our Trade** - Railways contributed to the expansion of trade in our country. However, this expansion of trade was more of the colonial character. Railways made it possible to arrange for mass distribution of manufactured goods of England. They also made it possible to collect agricultural raw materials even from the remote corners of the country for supply to England. Thus the composition of trade that emerged was as follows. India used to import manufactured goods and export raw materials - a really colonial character of foreign trade.

In short, the Britishers used railways as a tool of economic exploitation. It failed to act as an agent of growth during that period of history. It served the trade and military interests of the Britishers.

- 3) Drainage of National Wealth** - The Britishers were tempted by the immense wealth of India. They took to large-scale plunder of it. They began to carry its capital and wealth to England on such a large scale that many historians and economists correctly labelled it as, the 'Economic Drain'. Among them the name of Dadabhai Naoroji and C. N. Vakil are worth mentioning.

This process of wealth and capital drain from India continued unchecked almost for 200 years. Even the richest nation would have been ruined when such inhuman treatment was given to it. India too could not survive these constant onslaughts. When the Britishers left India in 1947 Indian economy was completely shattered. It was thrown out of balance. The rich and prosperous land of India had been 'converted into a country of hewers of wood and drawers of water'.

### Check Your Progress

- Q.4) Discuss the adverse effects of Railways in India under the British rule.

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## 8.9 FAMINES:

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Famine means non-availability of the bare minimum food for subsistence. Such a situation arises when widespread drought conditions prevail in a country. Before the arrival of the Britishers in India the Indian villages were self-sufficient and they also catered to the food requirements of the urban population. The Britishers gave a new turn to the village set up and as a result of that the economic life in India became more stagnant. Recurrence of famines became a normal and regular phenomenon. About 22 major famines were reported from all over the country during 1770-1900. The most severe of them was the famine of Bengal in 1770. It took a toll of 35 percent population of Bengal. In another major famine of Western Uttar Pradesh in 1860-61 about 2 lakh people lost their lives. The most devastating was the famine of Bengal in 1943, which took a heavy toll of over 30 lakh human lives.

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## 8.10 CAUSES OF FAMINES:

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The main causes responsible for frequent famines during the British rule were as follows –

- a) **Failure of Monsoon and other Natural Calamities** - Indian agriculture depended fully on the monsoon. The Britishers did not make adequate arrangements for irrigation on the other hand they neglected the development of irrigation facilities. Failure of rains was the main cause of famines. Similarly failure of crops due to other natural calamities also caused scarcity of food grains.
- b) **Commercialization of Agriculture and decline of Self-reliance** - The Britishers did a great injury to the old economic structure and destroyed it completely. In the old order the cultivators produced food grains for self-consumption. They used to keep sufficient stock of food grains for facing eventualities like famines, droughts etc, under the new system the cultivator was required to pay the rent in cash. Therefore, it became obligatory for the cultivator to sell off his produce in the market and repurchase it for self-consumptions. Therefore, in case of crop failure the poor cultivator had to suffer untold miseries.
- c) **Inadequate growth of means of Transportation and Communication** - British rulers did not care much to develop the transport system. Though a network of railways was developed but it was only to help the Britishers to keep their strong hold on the Indian soil. Lack of the means of

transportation and communication obstructed the free and quick movement of food articles from one region to another at the time of famine.

- d) Export of Food Grains** - The Lassies Faire policy of the British Government encouraged massive exports of food grains. The Britishers did not even keep buffer stocks of food grains. At times food grains were exported even when there was shortage of food articles in India.
- e) Hoarding and Profiteering** - The business community further aggravated the famine conditions by indulging in hoarding black marketing and other profit making activities.
- f) Poverty** - Chronic poverty of the people was also responsible for the pathetic conditions of famines. People could not store food grains to provide for the emergency conditions because of their meagre money income. The Indian farmer was under heavy debt, his land holdings were small and scattered and the average productivity of land was also very low.

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### 8.11 FAMINE COMMISSIONS:

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The devastating effects of 1876-78 famine compelled the British Government to do something substantial to check the recurrence of famines in India. The first Famine commission was set up in 1878 under the Chairmanship of Sir Richard Strachey. The Commission recommended State interference in food trade in the event of famine. India witnessed another major in 1896-97. Therefore, the Second Famine Commission was set up in 1897, under the Chairmanship of Sir James Lyall. This Commission recommended the development of irrigation facilities. The Third Famine Commission was set up in 1901. This Commission recommended that the official machinery dealing with a famine must work all the year round so that the scarcity of food grains could be controlled well in time. Though all the three Famine Commissions worked sincerely and vigorously but the British Government was never serious in dealing with the welfare plans for the masses. Famines continued to occur and the Famine of Bengal 1943 was the most horrifying. This was the gift of the British rule to India.

The early phase of the British rule in India is characterized by direct loot and plunder of the wealth of India. Gradually this loot and plunder paved the way for more systematic colonial exploitation of the Indian economy first by the industrial capitalist and then by the finance capital. All the interests of the Indian economy were sacrificed at the altar of British interests. Indians old system, which showed a fine harmony between agriculture and

industry, crumbled down under the weight of the British interests. India was reduced to the status of a colonial appendage of the British Empire.

**New Revenue Settlements** - Lord Cornwallis Permanent settlement of 1793 created a number of absentee landlords. The assessment was arbitrary. No account was taken of the fertility of the soil and area of land. The Zamindars who were unable to meet their dues leased parts of their estates to middlemen. The rights of the Ryots were sacrificed. The permanent settlement was extended to Orissa, Banaras and to the Northern Sirkars in 1802-05.

Ryotwari Settlement was adopted in Madras. The settlement was made directly with the cultivator for a period of years. A direct relationship was created between the Government and the cultivator. The Ryot enjoyed free lessee as long as he paid legal dues. The system increased the security of the cultivator and removed the Zamindar the middleman.

Mahalwari or Village Settlement was adopted in the Punjab, Oudh, and Delhi. The settlement was not made with industrial landlords but with the village as such. The villagers as a whole both collectively and individually became responsible for the payment of revenue for the whole village.

**Monopoly versus Free Trade** - The East India Company enjoyed monopoly trade. Its opposition came from the British manufacturers in the wake of Industrial Revolution. The free traders won their victory when the Charter Act of 1813 abolished East India Company's monopoly of trade with India. By 1830 instead of being the world's largest exporter of Cotton Textile, India had been converted into a net importer of cottons from Manchester. The company, which had been making much profit, from Indian trade, now lost it. The Charter Act of 1833 abolished the company's monopoly of China trade also.

### Check Your Progress

Q.5) How far did the various Commissions succeed in handling the famines in India under the British?

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**8.12 SUMMERY:**


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India was very rich prosperous country in the ancient period and was called the 'Golden Sparrow'. This was reported by all foreign travelers. Its industrial development was reached to various countries in the world. The Roman Empire used to purchase many luxury fabrics and paid in gold and silver for them. Naturally, the Europeans came as traders and became rulers of India. Among them the Britishers ruled Indian much more than other European Companies. They exploited Indian agriculture, industries beyond imagination. Their rule, policy and government brought several changes as decay of indigenous industries, disappearance of the native courts, weaken the guilds, brought India machine made goods and decayed urban handicrafts. It also introduced railway to shift Indian raw materials to England which incurred famines in the country forever.

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**8.13 QUESTIONS :**


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1. Give an account of Indian agriculture under the British rule.
2. What were the effects of the British rule on Indian industry?
3. Account for the decline of urban handicraft under the British rule.
4. Assess the economic policy of the British government in India.

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**8.14 ADDITIONAL READING:**


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1. Bipan Chandra, The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India.
2. A.D.D. Gordon, Businessman and Politics: Rising Nationalism and Modernising Economy.
3. Irfan Habib, Essays in Indian History – Towards a Marxist Perception.
4. Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism.



## **RISE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

### **B2) British Economic Policies and their Impacts**

- (i) Rise of Economic Nationalism**
- (ii) Drain Theory**
- (iii) Emergence of Indian Capitalists**

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 9.0 Objective
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Dadabhai Naoroji's Drain Theory
- 9.3 Consequences of the Drain:
- 9.4 Emergence of Indian Capitalists
- 9.5 Summery
- 9.6 Questions
- 9.7 Additional Readings

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#### **9.0 OBJECTIVE**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to

- Understand the historical perspective of the rise of economic nationalism.
- Explain the exponent & of the economic nationalism.
- Comprehend the Drain theory.
- Grasp the internal and external drain of the Indian economy.
- Explain the important consequence of the drain of Indian economy.
- Perceive the role of Indian Capitalists in the national movement.



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## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

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For several generations now the name of Dadabhai Naoroji has been associated in the minds of Indian students of economics with the controversial 'Drain Theory'. He propounded this theory with a fervent missionary zeal. Dadabhai spoke and wrote on this subject in the manner of a crusader who used simple eloquent and sober language to explain the basic principles of this theory. He used phrases such as the 'material and moral drain', the 'deprivation of resources' the 'bleeding drain' etc. Dadabhai Naoroji was neither an economist nor a hard-headed businessman, but still he had an extraordinary sense of economic realism which often eludes both a trained economist and a hard-headed businessman.

The British rule drastically affected the politico-socio-economic structure of India. The result of the various economic policies adopted by them resulted in poverty and misery of the masses. The British in India followed a policy led to the extinction of the self-sufficient village economy. They evolved a system of education with the main object of creating a class of clerks so that the British rulers may be able to carry on their administration. Educated Indians were not given higher posts in the Government service and administration. During a century and a half the commercial policy followed by the British rulers was not determined by the need of the country but was aimed at serving the interests of England. Of the revenue collected in India the British were remitting about one-fourth to England as 'home charges'- Besides several millions of rupees were sent to England as private remittances. The British Government in India followed a policy of free-trade which led to free import of foreign commodities in the country and to the ruin of indigenous industries. Railways were extended to all parts of the country which helped the distribution of foreign goods from one corner to another and facilitated the export of raw materials to England. The effect of these developments was that India was becoming poorer and poorer day by day. India was the only colony of the British Empire which presented a scene of poverty and distress and recurring famines.

With the spread of education people began to analyze the causes of poverty in India. They realized that there was something fundamentally wrong with the politico-economic set up of the country. The Indian leaders observed that the British rule was the chief cause of poverty and misery of the Indians. They considered 'freedom from the colonial rule' as the solution to the problem. The views of the early nationalist leaders were politico-economic rather than purely economic. Thus the economic thought of the Indian leaders during the early phase of national movement and the Drain Theory propounded by Dadabhai Naoroji became the economic basis of Indian nationalism.

Dadabhai Naoroji was born in a Parsi family in Bombay on 4 September 1825. He was the first Indian to be appointed as Professor at Elphinstone College. In 1855, he went to England as a representative of Cama and Co., the first Indian business firm to open a branch in London. In 1856 he was appointed as Professor of Gujarati language at the University College, London. Later, Dadabhai Naoroji had the honour of being the first Indian to occupy a seat in the British Parliament. He was also the first Indian to be a member of the Royal Commission.

While in England, Dadabhai Naoroji studied the working of various British institutions. Along with W.C. Bannerjee, he started the London Indian Society to bring about a rapprochement between the British and Indians and to facilitate an exchange of views on subjects related to India. In 1866, Dadabhai Naoroji founded the East India Association in collaboration with English officers.

Dadabhai Naoroji tried to mobilize public opinion in England in favour of India. He began to talk about the duties of the Englishmen towards India. He worked hard to appraise the British people about the defects of the British rule in India through his speeches in the British Parliament and through his writings. Dadabhai Naoroji fought for financial justice for India in the House of Commons. His efforts met with partial success when a Royal Commission was appointed to 'enquire into the administration and management of the military and civil expenditure incurred... 'However, the Royal Commission failed to provide any financial justice to India.

After his return to India, Dadabhai Naoroji became the Dewan of the Baroda state. He was one of the founding members of the Indian National Congress and was elected as the President of the Congress thrice, 1886, 1893, and 1906.

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## **9.2 DADABHAI NAOROJI'S DRAIN THEORY:**

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The most important contribution of Dadabhai Naoroji in the field of economic thought is his famous 'Drain Theory' and its application to the Indian context. Having read Adam Smith's 'An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations', Dadabhai Naoroji turned his attention to 'An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of Indian Poverty'. He enunciated his Drain Theory in his famous book entitled 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India', which was first published in 1901 and revised in 1911.

Dadabhai Naoroji was amazingly painstaking scholar who knew his predecessors, the past precedents and the past controversies on the subject that attracted his attention. He formulated the Drain Theory into a doctrine, a powerful instrument of polemics which he used with great effect. To strengthen his

arguments Dadabhai quoted his predecessors at every step. He knew that he could succeed in convincing the British rulers if he quoted British authorities. Some of them were distinguished British administrators.

### **1 External Drain :**

According to Dadabhai Naoroji, the poverty of the Indian people was the main problem. That India was getting poorer and poorer every day was manifested by a number of facts, the low national income of the country, the low import and export figures, the low standard of living of people, the low revenue returns of the government, the recurring famines and the high rate of mortality. He was of the opinion that this existing poverty was the direct result of the British rule in India. Dadabhai attributed the poverty of India to the heavy drain on the resources of the country.

Dadabhai and his predecessors considered the economic drain as an external-cum-internal drain. It was a kind of built in mechanism which exorted resources out of a tow level colonial economy, and the surplus thus generated through a complicated process was drained out of the economy through the process of external trade, the dynamics of which was supplied by the unilateral transfer of funds in an equally complicated way. According to Dadabhai the functioning of this transfer of resources was uniquely determined by a number of objective political factors such as - 1) India being colonial economy governed by remote control. 2) India was quite unlike whitemen's colonies in the temperate zone which attracted labour as well as capital for economic development. 3) India was saddled with an expensive civil administration and equally expensive army of occupation. 4) India was a strategic base of operations that had to bear the burden of empire building not only in India but also beyond her borders. 5) Overheads of development being oriented towards strategic requirements, towards the requirements of administrative control in a vast country rule by a handful of foreigners, towards the objective of opening up the country to free trade- an instrument for colonial exploitation and towards the objective of creating highly paid jobs for foreign personnel. 6) India was a colony with a difference. public expenditure out of the proceeds of taxation and loans failed to generate as much of domestic employment and income as would have been possible if the principle income earners had not been 'birds of passage', or if they had spent their incomes largely within the country or on goods and services produced within the country.

The concept of economic drain in the Indian context has an old lineage going back to the age of mercantilism that witnessed the early career of the British East India Company. The main business of the company was the importation of luxury goods in exchange for silver from the east, particularly from India. Thomas

Mun, the author of 'England's Treasure by Foreign Trade' was a director of the Company. Sir Josiah Child was governor of the same company. Both were mercantilism writers. Mun wrote- 'that part of our stocks which is not returned to us in wares must necessarily be brought home in treasure'. According to Sir Josiah Child, 'if the exports exceed the imports, it is concluded the Nation gets treasure by the general course of its trade, it being supposed that the surplus is imported in bullion and so adds to the treasure of the kingdom, gold and silver being taken for measure and standard of riches'. Thus, the drain of gold and silver from a country was considered 'unfavourable', while the opposite kind of drain 'favourable'. Mun wrote on the subject of trade to defend the activities of the East India Company. The Company was importing luxuries, contrary to the principles of mercantilism, and was also exporting silver to pay for them, another violation of the principle he himself enunciated. Mun argued that both these economic activities, though apparently offensive, were in long run for the good of the state. Drain of silver to the east was justifiable as in due course more silver came back in exchange. Luxuries imported from the east could be sold in Europe at a profit and brought more in silver than was drained away in the first instance. If luxury imports by the East India Company were stopped, foreigners would supply the demand at a higher cost.

The basic economic situation in India was radically transformed after 1757, following the British victory in the battle of Plassey, which laid the foundation of the British power in India. A trading company, by a curious combination of circumstances, became a sovereign ruler. Thus profit making through trade became integrated with administration which also became an instrument of profit making. The surplus had not only to be mopped up but had also to be transferred to England. Thus there was an unprecedented economic drain. Such a situation was quite different from what confronted Thomas Mun and Sir Josiah Child in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the East India Company was obliged to export silver to India and the bulk of the company's exports of goods and bullion were disposed of on Indian soil. The reverse movement of treasure after Plassey was an unprecedented phenomenon that set a new pattern of external drain, a pattern which had attracted the attention of Dadabhai's predecessors whom he quoted in defense of the drain theory.

The transfer mechanism acquired a complex character that could no longer be explained in terms of crude mercantilist concepts. The so called 'unfavourable' balance of England's trade with the east, particularly India, was really accounted for by unilateral transfer of funds. However, the statement in the 'Import and Export Report' for the year 1790 states - 'the great excess of the imports over the exports in the East India Trade, appears as a

balance against us, but this excess consisting of the produce of the Company's territorial revenues, and of remittances of the fortunes acquired by individuals instead of being unfavourable is an acquisition of so much additional wealth to our public stock'. Dundas, a persistent opponent of the East India Company became convinced by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that he must reconcile himself to the fact that the surplus revenues of British India could only be realized through the medium of trade and that it was the East India Company which could provide a sure mode or remittance.

Dadabhai Naoroji quoted British administrators of a much earlier period in support of his drain theory. In his famous minute to the Fifth Report (1787), Sir John Shore had said - 'the Company are merchants as well as sovereigns of the country. In the former capacity they engross its trade, whilst in the latter they appropriate the revenues. The remittances to Europe of revenues are made in commodities of the country, which are purchased by them. Thus India's external trade, even if it were to expand, was not expected to bring an equivalence of imports. Sir John Shore thought that this was 'an evil inseparable from a European Government'. The surplus of revenue over expenditure was spent on the purchase of domestic manufactures which were exported to 'remit to England the Surplus'.

Lord Cornwallis in his minute of 1790 had specifically referred to the heavy drain of wealth. According to him the causes of external drain were 1) large annual investment in Europe and 2) remittances of private fortunes for many years past, the impact of which was severely felt, at the time or writing, in the form of scarcity of specie for current transactions and the consequent depression in India's agriculture and internal trade. Like Dundas, Lord Cornwallis was convinced of the prudence of maintaining the East India Company as a political as well as a commercial body, the fundamental reason being the mixed character of the organization, which guaranteed remittance of funds from India.

Coming down to later times, Dadabhai quoted the testimony of Fredrick John Shore a Bengali civilian who said in 1837, 'the halcyon days of India are over, she has been drained of a large proportion of the wealth she once possessed'. Similarly, Seville Marriot, a Commissioner of revenue in Deccan said in 1857, 'most of the evils of our rule in India arise directly from, or may be traced to the heavy tribute which the country pays to England'. Marriot quoted a Chairman of the Court of Proprietors who had said, 'India paid to the mother country in the shape of home charges, what must be considered the annual tribute of 3 million pounds and daily poured into the lap of the mother country a continual stream of wealth in the shape of private fortunes'.

It is interesting to note that these early British commentators used certain significant concepts such as 'trade with no equivalent returns', 'drain of wealth', 'remittances of surplus', and 'annual tribute'. These concepts formed the core of the theory of the mechanism of external economic drain, which Dadabhai finally formulated with the help of elaborate statistics in order to indicate the order of magnitude of the various factors involved.

From the Parliamentary Returns of Indian Accounts Dadabhai Naoroji compiled two series, 1) annual 'charges in India' and 2) annual 'charges in England'.

Charges in India represented public expenditure. He assumed that one-tenth of 'Indian charges' from 1787-88 to 1828-29, the early period of the expansion of British Empire in India, represented a number of items. These items were as follows - 1) Remittances to England by European employees for the support of families and education of children a feature of colonial system of government. 2) Remittances of savings by employees of the Company, as most employees preferred to invest at home 3) Remittances for the purchases of British goods for the consumption of British employees as well as purchases by them of British goods in India. 4) Government purchase of stores manufactured in England.

'Charges in England' included interest on public debt held in India and loss in exchange, and excluded interest on railway debt and debt incurred for productive works. 'Home charges' did not figure during the period 1787-88 to 1828-29. Dadabhai made a rough estimate of the wealth transferred prior to 1788. He checked his estimate with the help of trade returns available for the period of about 50 years, 1814-1865, taking into account exports, imports and bullion movements.

Dadabhai included in the category of drain, 'Home charges' and the remittances of various kinds. In justification he quoted Sir George Wingate, who had described these payments as 'Tribute'. He also referred to another striking description by another Englishman, viz., that they were the 'Salary of England' for ruling over India. Dadabhai was not content with more quotation. It is clear that he had in mind the category of non-commercial exports, i.e., exports which did not in any commercial returns in the form of imports. He was, however, well aware of the fact that the balance of payment did contain an element which could not be described as a 'tribute', viz., the remittance of interest on loans for railways, irrigation works and other productive purposes.

Dadabhai's concept of external economic drain had an interesting dimension. The drain theory had its crude exponents in his time. Keeping money or purchasing power within the country

and preventing it from being drained away is a notion which is as old as mercantilism and as old as the nationalist movement in India. Dadabhai grasped the underlying economic reality. He applied the criterion of the effect of public expenditure on the generation of income and employment with the country. Exportation and importation, if they are a foreign monopoly, yield profits which do not generate domestic incomes and employment abroad. Here is a foreign leakage to use modern expression, or a 'drain' as Dadabhai understood it. The Englishman who imported British goods for his personal consumption or bought British goods in India, or the government which bought in India or in England, stores of British manufacture. In these cases individual as well as public consumption failed to generate domestic incomes and employment.

Dadabhai Naoroji attempted to prove that the colonial economic drain had a distinctive character in the case of India as compared with colonies that had been developing as whitemen's settlements in the temperate regions. Dadabhai noted that 'the whitemen's colonies had a sizeable import surplus in relation to the capital exporting mother country. This import surplus was caused by heavy imports of capital for colonial economic development which generated employment and income in the colonies.

Although Dadabhai regarded railway development with borrowed capital as a mitigating factor, he thought that it did not produce the same consequences in India as it did, for example, in the U.S.A. He recognized that railways help in increasing the production of a country, because they distribute the produce of the country from parts where it is produced or is in abundance to the parts where it is wanted. But every country in building railways, even by borrowed capital, derives the benefit of a large part of such borrowed capital. Excepting interest paid for such borrowed capital to the foreign lending country, the rest of the whole income remains in the country. In the U.S.A. every cent of the income of the railways, excepting the interest on the foreign loan, is the income of the people of the country, is a direct maintenance for the people employed on it and an indirect property of the whole country. In India the case was quite different. First for the Director's home establishments, government superintendence etc., in England a portion of the income had to go from India. Secondly, a large European staff of employees, excepting only for inferior and lowest places, took away another large portion of the income. Dadabhai thus came to the conclusion that 'the really important question in relation to public works is not how to stop them, but how to let the people of the country have their full benefits'.

The tropical colonies of England, including India received only one third of the total capital outflow. This part of British capital was employed in a different type of area where its achievements were

much more dubious, tropical or sub-tropical regions that formed a minor field for overseas investment before 1914 and are a major problem today. Nineteenth century British investment centred on railways. The Indian railways accounted for one tenth of the total British railway securities in 1914. British railway investment was protected by a system of extensive government assistance in the form of land grants, subsidies and guaranteed returns to investors. However, in the case of India, the railway did not give rise to a flood of satellite innovations and destroy more employment opportunities than it opened up. It was usually recognized that the colonial pattern of investments in extractive industries tended to promote lopsided rather than balanced growth. Apart from this the early history of plantation industries and mining in India also promoted British interest rather than granting a long range benefit to the Indians.

It was a paradox to Dadabhai's contemporaries that a drain theory could be sustained in the context of a sizeable export surplus which India had in relation to England. The critics of Dadabhai who had not given up their mercantilist ideas thought that an export surplus did promise a profit to India and an influx of goods into India was a tangible realization of this profit. This in the course of his criticism, against Dadabhai, Sir Grant Duff referred to the absorption of gold and silver and to the hoarding of these precious metals. Was not India a sink of precious metals? Duff further argued that if India was prosperous as a sink of precious metals before the period of British rule, how could she be otherwise in the face of the inflow of bullion after 1801? However, Dadabhai was too clever to be lured into a mercantilist trap. It is interesting to note that he exposed the hollowness of Duff's argument on its own ground by a clever array of facts. Dadabhai argued that India had not got its imports of silver as so much profit on its imports of silver as so much profit on its exports of making up so much of deficit of imports against exports. The import of bullion has been chiefly from commercial and financial necessities.

The opium trade with China played an interesting role in the functioning of the mechanism of the external economic drain. The East India Company transferred its revenue surplus and its corrupt officers their savings and secret gains via China. All the profits of opium went the same way of the drain to England- Only India shared the curse of the Chinese people being the instrument of the opium trade. At one time the supply of Indian opium to China was a monopoly and a source of large profits. Although in 1782 the East India Company had stopped sending any opium to be sold in China on its own account, as a commercial organization they were much concerned with the success of their public sales in Calcutta and as administrators they were compelled by the necessity of encouraging buyers at the Calcutta opium auctions. Gradually the



administration had to calculate not merely the quantity which could be sold at the existing high prices but the price at which competitive supplies could be sold in the China market. By the end of the nineteenth century Indian opium had lost its character of monopoly in the China market and the trade was dwindling. The competition came from Persia and from China itself. Thus Indian exports of opium declined from 91, 798 boxes in 1882-23 to 75,384 boxes in 1892-93.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1) What do you understand by external economics drain depicted by Dadabhai Naoroji?

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### 2 Internal Drain:

According to Dadabhai Naoroji the external economic drain was the counter part of the internal economic drain, just as he saw the internal economic drain as the dependent effect of the external economic drain. Resources abstracted from internal production through taxation took the form of commodities which, in real terms, were the equivalent of the transfer of income abroad. Public finance, i.e., Government spending in relation to loan and taxes becomes in this context a means of establishing an equilibrium between the quantum of transfer of purchasing power abroad and the quantum of purchasing power required to be diverted from consumption of taxation and loans. Since the quantum of external transfer was large in relation to the per capita income, there was a kind of precarious equilibrium between the internal transfer of income and the external transfer.

The chief argument of Dadabhai was that the internal transfer was as much of an economic drain as the external transfer. The external economic drain was a 'drain because of unrequited exports, 'non-commercial' exports, which did not bring any return in the form of imports. The internal economic transfer through taxation, which meant, by and large, transfer of purchasing power from the poverty stricken, rural areas of the country, was also largely of the nature of unrequited exports to England. There were other kinds of leakages which occurred under more favourable political and economic conditions. They provided compensations in different ways. The familiar examples were the compensatory effects of redistributive taxation, or welfare expenditure including

state expenditure, on the creation of economic and social overheads which benefit the bulk of the population, or at least the expenditure of the proceeds of taxation largely within the country which create primary employment and income and, through them, secondary employment and income and, so on down to the tertiary level. Dadabhai pointed out that Indian public finance lacked these compensatory features except in so far as the state undertook public investments in railways and irrigation works and road development due to various reasons their fullest possible compensatory effects were not realized. Thus, Dadabhai had a very grim view of Indian public finance.

The view of Dadabhai Naoroji was shared by liberal minded Englishmen in the middle of the nineteenth century who had a sympathetic understanding of the reality of the Indian economic situation. Mounting public expenditure combined with in elasticity of revenue became a cause of serious concern after the Revolt of 1857. In his book 'British Opium Policy and its results to India and China', F.S. Turnal, formerly of the London Machinery Society and Secretary of the Anglo Oriental Society for Suppression of the Opium Trade, gives his views of Indian finance which almost corresponded completely with those of Dadabhai. Turnal mentioned two features of Indian Finance - 1) The expansiveness of the British Government in India, which was steadily increasing and 2) The very slight elasticity of Indian revenue.

He said, 'the hard fact of the actual experience has taught us that a population of two hundred millions of whom the vast majority live in a condition of poverty hardly understood in England cannot supply reserves equal to the requirements of our expensive system of government. When we are informed that we cannot govern India without exacting from the very poorest of the people a tax of 600 percent on such a necessary of life as salt, we can hardly help wondering whether, after all, British Government can really be, on the whole so great a boon in India'. It is evident that 75 percent of the total revenue was derived from land revenue, salt, excise, and stands, i.e., from taxation borne by the masses of the population, 16 percent was derived from the government's opium monopoly. By way of customs about 7 percent of the total revenue was collected.

On the expenditure side the army and the navy absorbed about 43 percent. Interest on debt and expenditure on guaranteed railways payment to British investors absorbed 18 percent. Police, justice and civil administration accounted for about 16 percent. Thus 59 percent of public expenditure was accounted for by defense, administration and the maintenance of law and order. 18 percent was the return on British capital, much of which did not yield any direct, or atleast immediate benefit for the masses of the population. Only 15 percent of public expenditure was accounted

for by welfare services like public works and education. Like Turnal, Dadabhai was alarmed by the increase of public expenditure since the Revolt of 1857, which intensified the internal economic drain. He pointed out that the increase was from 32 million pounds in 1856 to 49 million pounds in 1870-71.

The views of Dadabhai Naoroji on public expenditure had crystallized as early as 1871 in his papers called 'commerce of India' and 'Financial Administration'. In his 'Commerce of India' he referred to the political debt of 100 million pounds and the burden of 'Home Charges', pointing out that, while British Exchequer contributed nearly 3 million pounds to meet public expenditure in the colonies, in the case of India it was an unmitigated drain. He criticized the economically crude and unintelligent policy of making present generation pay the whole cost of public works for the benefit of the future. This he considered as the lack of 'intelligent adaptation of financial machinery' and much 'reckless expenditure'. In his paper 'Financial Administration' he pleaded for economy in this expenditure.

Dadabhai made a through analysis of the inequitable burden of military expenditure borne by India. In this matter he was the spokesman of nationalist India before the Welby Commission of 1895. He pleaded that the cost of British Forward Policy should not substantially be borne by India. According to his calculation, the total cost of the frontier wars upto 1896 was Rs. 714,50,48p/- Nearly Rs. 129,000,000/- were spent beyond the western and north-western frontiers of India from 1882-1891. The Afghan War cost Rs. 223,110,000/-. During the period 1855-1895 there was frontier activity from Quetta to Gilgit, from Sikkim to Burma. The expeditions on the north-western section of the border alone cost Rs. 52,569,000/-. In respect of this large amount of military expenditure Dadabhai raised an important point of principle, viz., 'that the Indian frontier question was an indivisible part of a great imperial question mainly depending for its solution on the policy of the British Government in England. Every war, large or small, that is called on beyond the frontiers of 1858 is distinctly and clearly mainly for Britain's imperial and European purposes'. Dadabhai agreed that India might pay a share of the cost in India for what England regards as absolutely necessary for her own purpose of maintaining her empire in India'.

The increase in the public debt was considered another source of the swelling of the economic drain by Dadabhai Naoroji. Apart from the political debt inherited from the East India Company, the public debt, excluding loans for public works incurred during the period of 1883-1892 was 16 million pounds the interest charges were an addition in both the internal and external economic drain. During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, there was

a substantial addition to loans for railways for irrigation works. On guaranteed railways, Dadabhai's comment was highly credible- 'I am morally certain that there has been great waste in the construction of the guaranteed railways'. Since the remunerative character of many projects was set aside out of administrative or political considerations, the ultimate burden of 'extra-ordinary' works fell on the taxpayer. Dadabhai condemned the principle of meeting the net charges out of ordinary, general revenues as an inequitable financial principle. He mentioned three evil consequences of such a system. 1) Uncertainty, delay and the consequent waste in the works themselves. 2) The intolerable pressure of taxation upon the people and their dissatisfaction and 3) the withdrawal of so much capital which was so dear for the ordinary wants of the production and the commerce of the country.

### Check Your Progress

Q.2) Explain the Internal Drain of India as stated by Dadabhai Naoroji.

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## 9.3 CONSEQUENCES OF THE DRAIN

It is impossible to accurately measure the amount of drain which in the form of resources and gold bullion flowed from India into England during the long British rule over India. With the available information, it was calculated that one-fourth of all revenue derived in India came to be annually remitted to England as Home Charges. According to Dadabhai Naoroji between 1814 and 1865 about 350 million pounds went to England by way of drain. He calculated this figure from Indian export surplus over her imports during those years. It should be noted that these figures exclude the loot and plunder by vast number of petty officials of the East India Company and by Government and Governors-General to shift to England on personal account.

The vast amount of resources and capital which flowed from India into England naturally enabled the people of England to live a better standard of life. The drain also made possible rising investments in English agriculture and industry after 1750. These investments were partly responsible for agricultural revolution in England in the eighteenth century and as also industrial revolution which commenced after 1750. Rich officials and merchants who retired in England with huge amounts and pensions after serving in

India had the leisure and money to devote their attention to new inventions, construction of roads, canals and railways and bring rapid changes in all sectors of economy. The drain provided the foundation of English economic prosperity.

On the other hand the effects of the drain on Indian economy and on its people were disastrous. The loot and plunder and the enormous profits which were taken out of India year after year meant a continual drain of Indian resources and a dead loss. These resources and gold which could have been available for investment in India were siphoned off to England.

The public debt policy of the government and payment of annual interest on them meant increasing tax burden on the Indian people. Highly regressive taxation was imposed on people for servicing the Government of India's debt raised in England. According to Dadabhai tax burden in India was 14.3 percent of income in 1886 whereas in a more prosperous country like England at that time it was only about 6.12 percent of income.

Another result of far reaching significance was that when the government of the country spends the tax proceeds within the country, money circulates among the people creating demand for various types of goods and services and thus leads to a profitable progress in trade agriculture and industry. The benefits of such a policy percolate down to the mass of people, but when tax proceeds are spent abroad as it happened in the case of the drain, it meant siphoning off the resources out of India, thus impoverishing her trade, agriculture and industries. The drain was thus to a large extent responsible for the stagnant economy of India during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Dadabhai Naoroji was of the opinion that the drain was the principal and even the sole cause of India's poverty. He argues, 'It is not the pitiless operations of economic laws but it is the thoughtless and pitiless action of the British policy, it is the pitiless eating of India's substances in India and further pitiless drain to England'. In short, it is the pitiless perversion of economic laws by the said bleeding to which India is subjected that is destroying'. He pointed out that the drain represented not only the spending abroad of certain portion of national income but also the further laws of employment and income that would have been generated in the country, if the drain would have been spent internally.

The nationalist leaders also saw drain as so much loss of capital rather than loss of wealth. They were aware that the drain was harmful chiefly because it resulted in the depletion of productive capital. The drain resulted in Industrial retardation as it produced shortage of capital. The nationalist leaders, thus, tried to

analyze and show the effects of the drain on income and wealth, on capital, on industrial development, on land revenue, on the terms of trade and on the poverty of the Indian people. Through the drain theory, the nationalist writers, especially Dadabhai Naoroji effectively brought out the highly exploitative nature of British rule in India.

The nationalist leaders pointed out several measures of reducing the burden of the drain. The most important measure suggested by them in this connection was the Indianisation of civil and military services, and reducing the personnel from England to a reasonable proportion. Another measure suggested was the reduction of the Home Charges. It was suggested that England should shoulder a large part of the Home Charges. It was also suggested that Home Charges could be reduced by reducing the burden of interest and capital payments in India's public debt held in England. The burden of the drain, it was suggested, could also be reduced by purchasing, wherever possible, government stores in India itself, as also by checking the increasing import of private foreign capital.

Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, the great sentinel of India's freedom who battled untiringly in the cause of the submerged masses of India, had seen the face of poverty. In his the 'other India' the India of voiceless, poverty stricken millions had found an untiring friend and crusader who fought their battles with an obsession than was the despair of his opponents. He was an intellectual who believed in the power of the written and the spoken word, in the triumph of truth and justice in the ethical conscience of the British Ruler and his sense of fair play.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.3) What were the consequences of the economic Drain of India?

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## **9.4 EMERGENCE OF INDIAN CAPITALISTS**

### **9.4.1 Role of Indian Capitalists in the National Movement**

The national movement brought into its vortex different sections of the Indian society. Though initially the educated classes and professional groups were in the forefront of the national movement, gradually the capitalists also joined the mainstream of national struggle. A number of Indian capitalists joined the Indian

National Congress and fully identified with the national movement. Among the capitalists who got themselves fully involved in active freedom struggle as members of the Congress were Jamnalal Bajaj, Vadilal Lallubhai Mehta, Samuel Aaron, Lal Shankar Lal and others. There were other capitalists, who, though did not join the Congress, sympathized with the freedom struggle and readily gave financial and other help to the movement. Capitalists like G.D. Birla, Ambalal Sarabhai and Walchand Hirachand, fall into this category. Besides these, there were a number of medium and smaller traders and businessmen, who according to their own capacity contributed their mite to the national movement.

The economic development of the Indian capitalist class in the colonial period was substantial. The Indian capitalist class grew from about the mid nineteenth century with largely an independent capital base. The Indian capitalist class on the whole was not tied up in a subservient position with pro-imperialist feudal interests either economically or politically. During the period 1914-1947, the capitalist class grew rapidly, increasing its strength and confidence. It is important to note that, this growth, unusual for a colonial capitalist class did not occur, as a result or by product of colonialism or because of a policy of decolonization. According to Bipin Chandra, it was achieved in spite of and in opposition to colonialism, by waging a constant struggle against colonialism and colonial interests. Thus, by the mid 1920s, Indian capitalists began to perceive their long-term class interests and felt strong enough to take consistent and openly anti-imperialist position.

Since early 1920s, a number of capitalists such as G.D. Birla and Purushottamdas Thakurdas made efforts to establish a national level organization of Indian commercial, industrial and financial interests in order to safeguard their advantages by lobbying, with the colonial government. This resulted in the establishment of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in 1927. Capitalists from different parts of India became its members. Among the members of the FICCI some of the astute minds of the period developed a fairly comprehensive economic critique of imperialism in all its manifestations. The Congress leaders quite often sought their assistance and treated their opinions and expertise on many national economic issues.

Gradually, the FICCI realized that it would not be enough to confine its activities for its own economic demands and felt strong enough to effectively intervene in politics. The political inclination was naturally to strengthen the hands of those who were fighting for the freedom of the country. ‘

Though the Indian capitalist class was in favour of freedom struggle, it had its own notions of how the anti-imperialist struggle ought to be waged. It favoured constitutional approach including negotiations rather than confrontation with the colonial government. Hence, the capitalist class had its own reservations regarding the efficacy of the mass civil disobedience. The capitalist class was apprehensive of the mass civil disobedience being prolonged which might unleash forces which could turn the movement revolutionary in a social sense and threaten capitalism itself. The capitalists were unwilling to support a prolonged all-out hostility to the government of the day as it could endanger and threaten the very existence of the class. However, in the final analysis the attitude of the Indian capitalists towards mass civil disobedience was quite complex. While on the one hand, they were afraid of protracted mass civil disobedience, on the other hand, they clearly saw the utility, even necessity of civil disobedience in getting crucial concessions- for their class and the nation. In January 1931, commenting on the ongoing civil disobedience movement, G.D. Birla wrote to, Purushottamdas, 'There could be no doubt that what we are being offered at present is entirely due to Gandhiji...' if we are to achieve what we desire, the present movement should not be allowed to slacken'. However, after the mass movement had gone on for considerable time, the capitalists sought the withdrawal of the movement and a compromise, but this was to be only after extracting definite concessions: The capitalists, throughout the mass movement pressurized the government to stop repression, remove the ban on the Congress and the press, release political prisoners and stop arbitrary rule with ordinances as a first step to any settlement.

The attitude of the Indian capitalists to the various forms of agitation had undergone significant change during the entire period of the national movement: During the Swadeshi Movement (1905-08), the capitalists remained opposed to the boycott agitation. Even during the non co-operation movement of the early 1920s, a small section of the capitalists, including Purushottamdas, openly declared their opposition to the non co-operation movement. This attitude underwent drastic change during the 1930s' Civil Disobedience Movement. The capitalists largely supported the movement. On 5 August 1942, four days before the launching of the 'Quit India Movement', Purushottamdas, J.R.D. Tata and G.D. Birla wrote to the Viceroy that the only solution to the present crisis, the successful execution of the war and the prevention of another civil disobedience movement was 'granting political freedom to the country... even during the midst of war'.



**Check Your Progress :**

Q.4) State in brief the contribution of the various capitalists towards the Indian national movement

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**9.5 SUMMERY:**

The most important contribution of Dadabhai Naroji is his popular 'Drain Theory' and its application to the Indian context. After having read Adam Smith's 'An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of Indian Poverty', he enunciated his Drain Theory in his book entitled 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' published in 1901. In this theory, he dealt External and Internal economic drain of India by the British. He mentions that out of total revenue one-fourth revenue went to England as Home charges. Around 350 million pounds went to England in addition to exploitation of India by officials and Governors – Generals of British India. Naturally, India became milk cow for Britishers where her people were furnishing.

**9.6 QUESTIONS:**

1. Enumerate the important factors that led to the drain of Indian economy.
2. Discuss the external and internal drain of Indian economy.
3. Examine the major consequences of the drain of Indian economy.
4. What was the position of Indian capitalists during the Indian national movement? What role did they play in it?

**9.7 ADDITIONAL QUESTION:**

1. Bipin chandra The rise and Growth if economic Nationalism.
2. Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism.
3. A. R. Desai, Social Back ground of Indian Nationalism.
4. Charles Heimsath, Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform.
5. Bipan Chandra, The Rise and Growth of economic nationalism in India
6. Irfan Habib, Essays in Indian History.
7. Tarachand, History of the freedom movement in india vol.1-4
8. R. C. Majumder, There phase of India's freedom shoyle



## RISE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

### (C1) The founding of Indian National Congress, its Policies and Programme

#### (i) Provincial Associations and Founding of Indian National Congress

#### UNIT STRUCTURE

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 The British Indian Association
- 10.3 The Indian Association
- 10.4 The Bombay Association
- 10.5 The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha
- 10.6 Circumstances that led to the Genesis of the Indian National Congress:
- 10.7 Allan Octavian Hume
- 10.8 The first Session of the Indian National Congress:
- 10.9 Summery
- 10.10 Questions
- 10.11 Additional Readings

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#### **10.0 OBJECTIVES:**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to

- Comprehend the background of the Provincial Associations.
- Explain the foundation of the and Holder's Society.
- Know the Bengal British India Society.
- Understand the British Indian Association.
- Grasp the foundation of the Indian Association.

- Perceive the circumstances that led to emergence of the National Conference.
- Comprehend the factors responsible for the foundation of the Bombay Association.
- Understand the establishment of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha.
- Explain about the emergence of the Mahajan Sabha of Madras.
- Summarize the circumstances that led to the Genesis of the Indian National Congress.

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## 10.1 INTRODUCTION:

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After the failure of the Revolt of 1857, political nationalism developed in India as a result of several forces working simultaneously or in close succession. To the socio-religious reform movement initiated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy was added the progressive impact of western civilization and education. The effect of both was greatly reinforced by the discontent produced by the economic policies of the British Government which resulted in the ruination of Indian industries and led to the increasing poverty and misery of the masses. It is important to note that the birth of nationalism in India was the outcome of the chief motive of the British rulers who sought to protect and promote British interests. As these interests came into conflict with those of the Indian people, and the British rulers sacrificed the interests of the Indians to their own sake, discontent and resentment were bound to grow. This naturally led to the growth of political nationalism. This new phase of national consciousness was manifested in the emergence of Provincial Political Associations.

The Provincial Associations brought the nineteenth century India on the threshold of modern politics. In the beginning religious zeal and some times caste solidarity encouraged people to form associations. These associations had limited scope and programme. However, 'during the course of the century a number of associations came to be established in different parts of the country by groups of men united by secular interests. The factors which held them together were a common education, common skills and functions and common aspirations and resentment against the policies of the British rulers.

The initial associations were limited by language and interests. They drew their support from certain sections of the society such as students, professionals, landlords, merchants and others. Their activities were limited to narrow geographical areas. But gradually more ambitious political organizations began to emerge extending beyond the narrow considerations. These were the Provincial Associations which began to search for ways and

means of working together in India as a whole. This trend, provided education to the Indians in the politics of associations which culminated in the establishment of the Indian National Congress.

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## **10.2 THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION:**

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The political activity among the educated Indians manifested in the Presidency capitals where the commerce and administration of the Company had first unsettled the traditional order. Thus, the earliest political associations were established in these Presidency towns.

The Company's Charter was due to expire in 1853. This was the proper time for the British Parliament to take stock of developments in India. Educated and politically conscious Indians decided to take this opportunity to float new political associations so that they could collectively discuss their problems and petition the British Parliament to introduce desired reforms in India. Thus, the discussions over the renewal of the Charter of East India Company gave birth to three Provincial Associations which were to dominate the politics of Bengal, Bombay and Madras for the next quarter of a century.

Bengal had a history of associations. One of the earliest associations was the 'Zamindar Association' founded in 1837. It was primarily an organization of the Bengali landholders to protect their vested interests. Although the Zamindar Association sought to preserve the economic interests of the feudal landlords, it had also a wider purpose and programme. According to Raja Rajendra Lal Mitra, the Zamindar Association afforded 'the first lesson in the art of fighting constitutionally for their rights and taught them manfully to assert their claims and give expression to their opinions'

On 20 April 1843 another organization called the 'Bengal British India Society' was founded at Calcutta. Its aim was 'the collection and dissemination of information relating to the actual condition of the people of British India, and the laws and institutions and resources of the country, and to employ such other means of a peaceable and lawful character, as may appear calculated to secure the welfare, extend the just rights and advance the interests of all classes of our fellow subjects'. The Bengal British India Society, however, did not receive much public support and it carried on without making itself felt politically. Between the years 1843 and 1850, before the foundation of the British Indian Association, there were only two political associations in the whole of India, the Bengal British India Society and the Zamindar Association, which was known by a new name the Landholder's Society. There was some attempt to organize branch associations in other parts of the country but without much success.

The British Indian Association was established on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1851. The Landholder's Society and the Bengal British India Society were merged into it. The first executive committee was composed of prominent members of both these organizations. When the promoters of the British Indian Association met at Calcutta they resolved that the society would be formed for a period of not less than three years' and that the object of the Association shall be to promote the improvement and efficiency of the British Indian government by every legitimate means in its powers, and there by to advance the common interests of Great Britain and India, and ameliorate the condition of the native inhabitants of the subject country'. Raja Radhakant Deb was chosen President of the Association and Devendranath Tagore its secretary. A small but fairly representative committee was appointed to manage the affairs of the Association.

The membership of the British Indian Association was not large. Perhaps at no time during the first thirty years of the Association's existence did it exceed two hundred. The number of those who took an active interest in the proceedings of the Association was probably not more than fifty. But it included some of the wealthiest, ablest and influential figures of the Indian community in Calcutta, representing different religions and professions. The Association had a regular establishment and ample funds. Though predominantly an organization of the Hindu Zamindar residing in Calcutta, the British Indian Association, by its able and zealous advocacy of Indian interests, soon established itself as a power in the land. The authorities often sought its advice and assistance and the people of Bengal looked upon it as their 'Parliament'. Its mouthpiece, the 'Hindu Patriot' became one of the most ably conducted and widely read weekly newspapers of that time in India.

The primary aim of the British Indian Association was to represent Indian interests in the debates regarding the future government of India in connection with the approaching renewal of the Company's charter. The Association desired that the sentiments of the people different Presidencies should be presented to the Parliament in a united fashion in a joint petition. Keeping this aim in view, the Association opened correspondence with the most influential persons of Bombay and Madras. On 11 December 1851, the secretary of the British Indian Association, Devendranath Tagore, addressed a letter to a prominent citizen of Madras which reflects the aims and intentions of the leaders of the Association. The letter invited the cooperation of native gentlemen in the southern presidency in advancing the objects of the Association' either by becoming members of it, and contributing to its funds, or... by establishing at the seat of Government or any other chief city, a Society of their own, having the same objects in view, but carrying on operations independently'.

The British Indian Association directed its attention to almost every important question, political, social, or economic, affecting Bengal in particular and the country in general. The Association submitted a number of petitions to the British authorities both in India and England. These petitions served as much to enlighten the Government as to educate the public. Among the chief reforms for which the British Indian Association petitioned the authorities were the reconstitutions of the legislative councils on a wider and more liberal basis. A demand for increased employment of Indians in the higher services. Holding of the Indian Civil Service Examination simultaneously in India and England. Appointment of a Parliamentary Committee to inquire into the affairs of India. Reduction of the Government expenditure and the home charges. Reduction of duties on imported cotton goods. Extension of the Permanent Settlement of the land revenue to other provinces of British India. Separation of the judicial and executive functions. Additional grants for education. Elimination of racial distinction in the administration of justice. Establishment of the Anglican Church in India. Charging low rate of postage for newspapers. Prevention of famines and epidemics. Removal of grievances of the railway passengers. Promotion of agricultural exhibitions, improvement in the administration of police, justice and municipal affairs.

Though a branch of the British Indian Association was founded in Oudh in March 1861, attempts to establish similar branches and through different local branches an All India organization, however, proved to be unsuccessful. The British Indian Association could not develop into a popular or a representative organization. Its membership was limited to those who paid an annual subscription of Rs. 50. Thus, the Association was dominated by the wealthy Zamindars of Calcutta who not only formed the majority of its membership but also its chief financial support. The few lawyers, traders, journalists and other professionals who were its members were also Zamindars themselves or the dependents of Zamindars. Thus, after 1858, the British Indian Association identified itself more and more with the interest of the landed aristocracy and ceased to represent the political ambitions of the Indian people. It is not surprising that the British Indian Association threw its whole weight for the most part on the side of the British rule in order to preserve its own interest. This attitude becomes clear in the petition, sent to Parliament in 1859, which urged the Government to introduce the permanent settlement all over India. Thus, it manifests an appeal to class interest, whether of the British rulers on the one hand, or the landholders on the other. Hence, there was nothing national about them. However as noted earlier, the British Indian Association reflected a more popular attitude with regard to other issues. Though it is undeniable that the leaders of the British Indian Association were enlightened, patriotic and public spirited, they were after all Zamindars and their

primary objective was to safeguard and promote their own interests. Nor is it surprising that the politics of the British Indian Association remained confined to petitioning the authorities and the occasional holding of a public meeting in order to reinforce its demands.

The British Indian Association with its exclusive character could not meet the aspirations of the rapidly growing middle class community in Bengal. The middle class was developing new ideas of patriotism and politics. By the 1860's this middle class composed mainly clerks, government employees, shop-keepers, teachers, lawyers, journalists and doctors formed a substantial part of the larger towns. The British Indian Association failed to secure any substantial advantages for the educated middle class of Bengal.

### **Check your Progress:-**

1. Where was the British Indian Association established?
2. What were its aims and objectives?

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### **10.3 THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION:**

There was a lot of dissatisfaction with the exclusive character of the British Indian Association. The glaring self-interest of the British Indian Association helped to bring a number of rival associations into being in Calcutta. Plans for a more dynamic body were commonplace among those who had studied in England. There they had watched the development of political organization. Manmohan Ghose and Womesh Chandra Banerjee had experimented with politics in the London Indian Society and in the East India Association. In Bengal also there were various proposals to establish new associations. In 1860 Vidyasagar was thinking of a Bengal Association. In Calcutta two groups were maturing plans for a new association with countrywide branches. One was led by Sishir Kumar Ghose and the other by Anand Mohan Bose and Surendranath Banerjee. Sishir Kumar Ghose formed the Indian League while the others were still formulating their plans. The Indian League was intended as a deliberate challenge to the British Indian Association. 'Let these two associations vie with each other

to do well to the country', Ghose urged in the columns of the 'Amrita Bazar Patrika'. The League's low annual subscription of Rs. 5 was intended to attract a new kind of members since it hoped to represent not only the middle classes but the masses also, to stimulate the sense of nationalism among the people and to encourage political education.

Within a year of its foundation, the Indian League was superseded by the Indian Association, which was inaugurated at a very largely attended meeting in the Albert Hall, Calcutta, on 26 July 1876. This new association echoed the argument that there was no political society in Bengal which represented the middle classes and ryots. The objectives of the Indian Association were declared to be 'to represent the people, and promote by every legitimate means, the political, intellectual, and the national advancement of the people'. According to one of the leaders, 'Loyalty to the British rule and agitation for a constitutional Government are, as we have already stated, the two maxims which the Indian Association has always promulgated'. Surendranath Banerjee, in his autobiography, states that the Indian Association had the following ideals in view when it was started - (i) The creation of a strong public opinion in India towards political questions, (ii) the unification of the Indian people on a common political programme, and (iii) the promotion of Hindu-Muslim Unity. The Indian Association helped in realizing these ideals to a large extent. The emphasis on national unity, which was a characteristic feature of the programme of the Association, helped in realizing these ideals to a large extent. The emphasis on national unity, which was a characteristic feature of the programme of the Association, was the result of the contact of the best minds of India with the West, and the popularity of the teachings of Mazzini the Italian patriot of the last century. Mazzini's success in unifying Italy against the foreign rule was held up before the Indian public as an example of the manner in which a subject nation could attain its freedom. Surendranath made several speeches on the idealism and heroic courage of Mazzini, and the young men of that time were urged to imitate his example.

The leaders of the British Association looked upon the Indian Association with feelings of benevolent neutrality. The young leaders of the Indian Association, whom a critic described as 'England returned hatted, coated gentlemen', had their own ideas on politics. Their prophet was Mazzini and they took Young Italy for their model for a political organization. As S. N. Banerjee, one of the leading promoters of the Indian Association wrote later, the idea that was working in our minds was that the Association was to be the centre of an all-India movement'. With the coming of the Indian Association, students shouted their way into the politics of Bengal. The men who founded the Indian Association had already founded the Students Association in 1875.



Consistent with its objectives of promoting a national movement, the Indian Association in its early years attempted to take such issues which were non-controversial and on which it could hope to unite easily all sections of the educated community in Bengal and elsewhere in the country. One such question was the virtual exclusion of Indians from high offices in their own country because of holding of the Indian civil service examination only in England. This was an old question, but it had recently been activated by an order of the Secretary of State for India, Lord Salisbury, reducing the upper age limit for the civil examinations from 21 to 19 years. This made it all the more difficult even for the few Indians who could afford to go to England to compete for the examinations. The Indian Association decided to organize a national protest against the Secretary of State's order. The enthusiasm and skill which the Indian Association displayed in organizing this protest marked it out as representing a new force in Indian politics.

The civil service question was greatly suited to become the battle cry of all India movement. It united men of different classes, creeds, and provinces in India by providing them with a genuine grievance and a righteous cause. It was the leaders of the Indian Association, particularly S. N. Banerjee and Anand Mohan Bose who discerned that it called all 'for a national movement'. They opened correspondence with leaders of public opinion in other parts of India with a view to organizing a national protest against the order of the Secretary of State. On 24 March, 1877 a public meeting was held in the Albert Hall, Calcutta at which speakers denounced Salisbury's action as ill-conceived attempt to exclude Indians from higher offices in their own country, in violation of the solemn pledges given earlier by the British Government. The meeting resolved to submit a memorial to the Parliament drawing the latter's attention to the principles and pledges contained in the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, and demanding not only restoration of the higher age limit for the civil service examination, but also holding of the examination simultaneously in India and in England. A committee, representing all sections of the Indian community in Calcutta, was appointed to draw up and forward the proposed memorial to the Parliament. S. N. Banerjee was deputed to travel all over the country in order to mobilize support in favour of the memorial.

Surendranath Banerjee as special delegate of the Indian Association toured the chief towns of northern India such as Lahore, Amritsar, Meerut, Delhi, Aligarh, Agra, Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, Banaras and Patna during the summer of 1877. In the following winter he visited Bombay, Ahmedabad, Surat, Poona and Madras in the same capacity. S.N. Banerjee's tour in the different parts of India was a remarkable success and helped to create a

feeling of national solidarity on important political issues. Such tours have become one of the chief features of Indian politics ever since, but S. N. Banerjee was the first politician to receive an all-India popularity. As a result of his tours many branches of the Indian Association were formed in other parts of Bengal and India.

The civil service agitation of 1877-79 had several significant features. Writing about the meeting held in Calcutta on 24 March, 1877, at which the campaign was formally launched the 'Friend of India' had observed, 'Orthodox Hindus, Muslims, Brahmans, Christians, drawn together in unison, with one common object, is a sight which every true friend of Indian progress, and everyone who is alive to the signs of the times, be he friendly or unfriendly, must regard with keen interest'. The 'Madras Standard' noted in December 1877 that the civil service movement was becoming a national movement. To Indian patriots the most gratifying aspect of the civil service movement was the union it had brought about between men of diverse castes, creeds, classes and regions in the country.

The extremely skillful and thoroughly constitutional manner in which the civil service agitation was carried on impressed even Anglo-Indians. The 'Times of India' wrote on 24 December 1877, 'The really remarkable feature of the whole movement is the moderation, the good sense and the political tact which have distinguished it from first to last... But probably the most significant feature of the civil service agitation of 1877-79 lay in the fact that it was the first instance of a political agitation co-ordinated on an all India basis by Indians themselves. The leaders of the Indian Association, particularly S. N. Banerjee and Anand Mohan Bose, were men with an all India outlook. They set out deliberately to organize a 'National Movement' on the civil service question.

The memorial which sought to obtain modification of the Secretary of State's proposal and simultaneous civil service examination in India and England was given to a delegate of the Indian Association to deliver in person to the House of Commons. The ground in England had long been prepared by 'Dadabhai Naoroji, who was in residence in that country. Lal Mohan Ghose was entrusted with the task of submitting the memorial to the Parliament, and his collaboration with the British Liberals made the cause of the Association a minor political event in England. There was a demonstration in its favour by the British Liberals at a meeting held in Will's rooms, where Lal Mohan's eloquent placing of the Indian cause made a profound impression. As a result of this and of Dadabhai's persistent efforts the Indian Government was empowered to make direct appointment for the civil service from amongst the Indians of proved merit and ability. This order was laid on the table of the House of Commons within 24 hours of the

demonstration at Will's rooms. Indian politicians, at that time were greatly impressed by the promptness with which Parliament had acted in this matter. They regarded it as a great victory for constitutional agitation.

The success of the Indian Association on the question of the civil service increased the belief in the efficiency of constitutional methods. When the Vernacular Press Act was introduced by Lord Lytton in 1878, curtailing the freedom of the Indian newspapers, the Indian Association addressed a letter of protest to Gladstone, the prime minister of England. This obnoxious Act was repealed by Lord Ripon, who became the Viceroy in 1880.

The Indian Association had a programme to rouse the districts. Until 1879 its task was the agitation to change regulations about entry into the civil service. From 1879 the demand for local self-government was added to the programme. In 1880 a circular was posted to all the district towns inviting them to join the Association in petitioning for an elective system in the municipalities. In 1884, when new local government rules came into force in Bengal, the Indian Association urged the educated community in the districts to take part in the elections and to press, wherever possible, for a non-official chairman.

With the establishment of the Indian National Congress, the Indian Association lost its political importance. Yet it has to be remembered that the idea of holding an all-India conference with representatives from every province was its own invention. The first Indian Conference was held in 1883. Anand Mohan Bose, who presided, remarked that it was the first stage towards a National Parliament. The second National Conference was held in 1885 at Calcutta, practically at the same time that the National Congress was meeting for the first time in Bombay. The Indian Association passed into oblivion as soon as the Indian National Congress began to function fully. It remained a separate institution for a long time, without any great hold upon the country. However, the ideal of the Indian Association appealed to the imagination of the educated class in India and helped in promoting a sense of national unity in the country.

### **Check your Progress:-**

3. Discuss in brief the achievements of the Indian Association.

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#### 10.4 THE BOMBAY ASSOCIATION:

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To the rulers of British India, Bombay city seemed a much happier place than Calcutta. 'Really loyal and well affected' was Northbrook's description of its people. Sir Richard Temple was of the opinion that in western India loyalty was a function of solvency, 'the rapid development of commerce-foreign and domestic, the expansion of industrial activity, the accumulation of capital, all tends to loyalty and goodwill towards governments. One reason for Bombay's apparent political calm was that while the city teemed with societies, most of them were not organized for politics, but were concerned with improving social conditions and reforming religious practices. However, it was wrong to assume that Bombay lacked the rudiments of a political life. But its political alliances tended to cut across communities and were drawn instead along the lines of wealth, education, age and interest. No less than Calcutta, mid-nineteenth century Bombay possessed wealthy men prepared to dabble into politics and anxious to see their signatures appended to petitions, so long as the proceedings remained respectable.

Bombay entered the age of political associations with the foundation of the Bombay Association on 25 August, 1852. Its inaugural meeting showed the varied population of the city. Jews and Portuguese mingled with Hindus and there was a large Parsi contingent. Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the first Parsi baronet, was elected the honorary president. Both vice-presidents were also Parsis. Much of the impetus behind the new body came from the Elphinstone College. The meeting decided that the Bombay Association should be the representative of the people of the Presidency, and that its members were to pay an annual fee of Rs. 25. Immediately, subscriptions of Rs. 30,000 were collected by donation to launch the Association. The first task of the Bombay association was to petition parliament about the Charter.

Like their counterparts in Calcutta and Madras, the leaders of the Bombay Association publicly condemned the rebellion of 1857 and manifested their loyalty to the British Government in many ways. The first important question which engaged the attention of the Bombay Association was that of the enormous and continuous rise in taxation, specially the proposed levy on profession and trades. Public feeling against the so called License Bill was as strong in Bombay as elsewhere in India. But the leaders of the Bombay Association were rather hesitant and slow in giving a lead for fear of courting official displeasure. It was not until 8 October, 1859, when the License Bill had already passed its second reading in the legislative council and long after Calcutta and Madras had formally registered their protest against it, that the Bombay

Association, under great pressure from the local press and public held a meeting at the house of Jagannath Shankarsheth. The meeting resolved to appoint a committee to report on the demands of the committee and if necessary to adopt a 'respectful presentation' to the legislative council. Some of the younger and more radical members of the Association led by Bhau Daji, urged the need for speedy action and for sending a separate and more comprehensive petition to the Parliament, similar to those sent in Calcutta and Madras, but it was in vain.

The Bombay Association lacked vitality and direction. After the death of its president, Jagannath Shankarsheth, in August 1865, the Bombay Association virtually ceased to function. The cause of the rapid decay of the Bombay Association in the early '1860's are to be found in the apathy and lack of harmonious co-operation on the parts of its members and the absence of public spirited men like Dadabhai Naoroji and Fardunji from Bombay. To these must be added the cotton boom in the Bombay, following the outbreak of the American civil war in 1861. The members of the Bombay Association, many of whom 'were business men became too busy with cotton to care for the country. The cotton boom ended in 1865, leaving behind a trail of financial disaster. Bombay was as it were awakened from its dream but it was some time before it returned to normal life. It was not until the end of 1867 that the Bombay Association was revived.

With the revival of the Bombay Association in 1867, a number of young graduates and lawyers, such as Bhandarkar Ranade, Mehta, Wagle, Telang and Tyabji were attracted to it. They also joined the Bombay branch of the East India Association which Dadabhai organized in 1869. The Bombay Association remained fairly active for about five years following its revival. It maintained a regular office in the Sassoon building, Elphinstone Circle Bombay. It corresponded regularly with the other public bodies in India and with the East India Association in London. It sent memorials to the authorities on many important questions of public interest, such as holding of competitive examination for the Indian civil service simultaneously in England and in India, the increased employment of Indians in high public offices, the financial administration of India and adjustment of financial relations between India and England, additional taxation, specially the income tax and the non-agricultural tax, the Native Marriage Bill and the preservation of the Peshwa's Daftar in Poona. In 1870, the secretary of the Bombay Association went to England, where he tried to enlist the support of influential sections in favour of the demands of the Association, particularly those relating to the reduction of military expenditure, the appointment of a trained man as a finance member in India the re-organization of the legislative councils and Parliamentary inquiry into Indian affairs.

The Bombay Association was dominated by the local 'plutocrats'. Its president, Mangaldas Nathubhai was the biggest property owner in the town. As elsewhere in India, a younger generation of England educated Indians was growing up in Bombay, represented by such men as Ranade, Mehta, and Telang. Their idea of politics differed from those of their predecessors and who considered the Bombay Association to be too aristocratic and indolent.

Towards the end of 1878 Bombay was hit by a severe commercial crisis which apparently administered the finishing stroke to the Bombay Association. Practically, finishing was heard of the activities of the Association during the next six-seven years. Bombay had to wait until January 1885 for the establishment of a really powerful and efficient organization. In the interval the Bombay branch of the East India Association maintained a semblance of organized political activity in the city.

#### **Check your progress:-**

4. What were the aims and objectives of the Bombay Association? How far were they fulfilled?

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### **10.5 THE POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA:**

The greatest rival of Bombay in the western presidency in the nineteenth century, not in the commercial but in the cultural and political sphere, was Poona. Poona was a Maratha city par excellence, and the Marathas were one of the biggest bugbears of the British in India. A hardy, intelligent and proud people, the Marathas had a highly developed sense of freedom and patriotism. Poona was the first city in western India to follow the lead of the British India Association of Calcutta. But the Poona Deccan Association, founded in early 1852 never got off the ground.

On 2 April 1870, Poona launched a political association of its own called the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha. It grew out of two different organizations. One was the association of Poona Brahmins intended to settle the management of the hereditary religious property of the Peshwas upon a sound basis, and the other was the remnant of a local association started in 1867, to act as an

intermediary between the district and the government. From the beginning the rules of the Sabha insisted that members should be representative Indians, with a mandate from at least fifty people suitably qualified by locality, profession or caste in this way the 95 members enrolled in the first year claimed to represent more than 6,000 people. Its presidents and vice-presidents were annually elected, and at first they were Maratha Sirdars. But most of the ordinary members were local lawyers, teachers, government servants and journalists. The managing committee of the Sabha was dominated by retired government servants and lawyers. Its most active members were G. V. Joshi, S. H. Sathe and S. H. Chiplunkar. The arrival of M. G. Ranade in Poona in November 1871 as a subordinate judge appears to have infused new life and vigour into the Sabha Ranade set the Sabha on its feet and became its guiding influence.

The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha did not content itself with memorializing the authorities. It had already taken the lead in organizing a Swadeshi movement in the Deccan. In 1872 and again 1876-78 the Sabha organized famine relief in the Deccan. In 1872 the Sabha appointed a sub-committee of its members to conduct an elaborate inquiry into the condition of the agricultural classes in the Deccan. In 1873 the Sabha combined with the Bombay Association in sending Naoroji Fardunji to London as their delegate to give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on Indian Finance. In 1874 the Sabha raised funds for the relief of the famine stricken population of Bengal. In 1875 the Sabha submitted a petition to the House of Commons, signed by 21, 713 people, demanding the direct representation of India in Parliament.

The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha did much to stimulate political activity in western India. Due to the influence of the Sabha, political associations grew up in many places in the presidency, especially in the Deccan. These associations were closely modelled on the Sabha and maintained regular contact with it. The leaders of the Sabha made a systematic and extensive use of the platform in order to arouse patriotic feelings among the masses. In July 1878, the Sabha launched its 'Quarterly Journal' which published the proceedings of the Sabha and contained ably written articles, many of them by Ranade, on the more important political, social and economic issues of the day.

As a political association in the ancient city of the Peshwas and conducted with energy and ability by the Maratha Brahmans, the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha had always been suspect in the eyes of many Anglo Indians. The government increased its surveillance on the Sabha and its leaders. Believing that Ranade was the master mind behind the Sabha, the Bombay Government under Richard Temple, transferred him early 1878 from Poona to Nashik and later from Nashik to Dhulia.

In May, 1876 the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha voted a congratulatory letter to Queen Victoria on her assumption of the title of 'Empress of India'. The Address, which was probably drafted by Ranade, was meant as much for the eyes of the rulers as for those of the people of India. In order to mark the assumption of the new title of 'Empress of India' by Queen Victoria, the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, Announced a grand durbar to be held at Delhi on 1 January, 1877. Sensing the unique significance of the forthcoming event and anxious to turn it to some national advantage, the leaders of the Sabha appealed to the princes and chiefs to combine for the discussion of the national questions. The Sabha also convened a conference of all native editors in Bombay city, in the hope of organizing the press of western India on the model of Calcutta Press Conference. In 1878, the Sabha protested publicly in Poona the Vernacular Press Act, and in the same year it sent a delegation to confer with the associations in Calcutta.

Until the Bombay Presidency Association got under way in 1885 the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was the leading Association in western India. It agitated on a wide range of subjects such as the Bombay Forest Regulations, the License Tax, and the Ilbert Bill and in favour of the local self government. The Sabha was the first to petition for an extension of Ripon's viceroyalty. In 1884 it pressed for reform of the legislative councils and of recruitment to the civil service. By building up a reputation for moderation and good sense, the Sabha succeeded in winning some influence with government which it retained until Tilak took over the Sabha in 1890's.

### Check Your Progress

5. why was the Poona Sarvajanik sabha founded ? Who were its leaders?

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## 10.6 FOUNDATION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS:

The foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was not an isolated sudden event or a historical accident. It was the result of the evolution of those political ideas and organizations. The political awakening that had begun in the 1860s and 1870s moved towards maturity in the late 1870s and early 1880s. The politically matured intellectuals broke the shackles of narrow group and regional interests and projected themselves as representatives



of national interests. The all-India nationalist organization that eventually emerged served as the platform, the organizer, the headquarters and the symbol of the new national spirit and politics.

It is generally believed that the reactionary measures of Lord Lytton such as the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, the Arms Act and the racial arrogance of the British culminating in their agitation over the Ilbert Bill hastened the process which ultimately led to the foundation of the Indian National Congress. However, it is important to note that the reactionary policy of Lord Lytton and the liberal policy of his successor Lord Ripon acted as catalyst in the formation of the Indian National Congress. There is no doubt that the Indian National Congress was the direct result of the emergence of national awakening.

Lord Ripon recorded three notes for the benefit of his successor before relinquishing the Viceroyalty. The first of these notes highlight the fact that the government should consult the educated leaders of India in respect of public matters. He had expressed the view that the British administration in India would be shattered if it failed to adapt itself to the newly emerging spirit of progress in the country. He was of the opinion that the legitimate aspirations and ambitions of the English educated Indians should be given a field so they could be won over as the friends and supporters of the British Raj - Thus, Ripon strongly urged that such leaders should be consulted and their opinions should be taken into consideration. He further stressed that the government should meet the just desires and provides satisfaction for the natural ambitions of those leaders of public opinion.

In his second note Lord Ripon turned down the demand of certain Anglo-Indian circles, both official and non-official, for reviving the Vernacular Press Act. He maintained that 'any attempt to resuscitate the Vernacular Press Act in any shape would be inconsistent with the established policy of the British Government and a violation of fundamental principles of our rule in India, that to deal upon one principle with the Vernacular Press and upon another with the Anglo-Indian Press would be grossly unjust and impolitic..'

In his third point Lord Ripon asserted that 'the increasing number of Europeans in India constitutes one of the principal difficulties of Indian administration in the present day', Ripon's Views on the increased difficulties of governing India due to the increasing number of Englishmen in the country and their hostility to the advancement of Indians were supplemented by Hobhouse. In 1883, Hob house had written to Ripon expressing his serious concern that a situation might arise in India, similar to that of Ireland where the small community get the ear of their countrymen to the

exclusion of the enormous mass of the real owners of the country. Hobhouse had pointed out that in order to avoid such a catastrophe the educated natives may form a sufficiently compact and intelligent body to exercise political pressure, and to make their views heard, and to advocate reasonable principles of government.

Though Lord Ripon's liberal views manifest his desire to organize the 'educated leaders of public opinion' and consult them on important matters of public question, there is no evidence available to suggest that before he left the shores of India he encouraged Hume to organize the educated Indians into a compact body. However, Ripon's constant endeavours throughout his Viceroyalty 'to strengthen the influence of public opinion in this country', his strong antipathy to the Anglo-Indian party and his extremely friendly relations with Hume suggest the possibility of such an encouragement. But whether or not Ripon was the real inspirer of the Indian National Congress, there can be little doubt that both in its origin and objectives, it reflected the impress of his ideas and of the events of his viceroyalty.

### Check Your Progress

6. Discuss the factors that led to the foundation of the Indian National Congress.

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### 10.7 ALLAN OCTAVIAN HUME:

It is not easy to trace the genesis of the Indian National Congress as a distinct organization. Pattabhi Sitaramayya in his 'History of the Indian National Congress' says that, 'It is shrouded in mystery as to who originated this idea of an All-India Congress. Apart from the Great Darbar of 1877 or the International exhibition in Calcutta, which are supposed to have furnished the model for the great national assemblage, it is also said that the idea was conceived in a private meeting of seventeen men after the Theosophical Convention held at Madras in December 1884. The Indian Union started by Hume after his retirement from the Civil Service is also supposed to have been instrumental in convening the Congress. Whatever the origin, and whoever the originator of the idea, we come to this conclusion that the idea was in the air, that the need of such an organization was being felt, that Allan Octavian Hume took the initiative...

A.O. Hume was son of the founder of the Radical Party in England, Thomas Hume. Ever since becoming the district officer in Etawah in North-West Province in 1849, A.O. Hume had been trying to reconcile his political beliefs with being an administrator in an imperial system built upon notions of racial superiority by involving himself such projects as the spread of education, fighting social evils and encouraging agricultural progress. In order to educate the people of Etawah in political and social affairs, Hume even started a newspaper in 1861. Hume's pro-Indian attitude and his efforts towards promoting the welfare of Indians did not find favour with his fellow British officers. However, he could claim that they had won goodwill of the Indians towards the British Raj. In 1870s Hume began to sense a feeling of unease caused by the belief that the Raj was becoming too impersonal an instrument of government and that the British officials were detaching themselves from governing the country for the benefit of the people. With Lord Lytton's reactionary policies Hume began to sense a fear of another conflagration in India even exceeding the magnitude of the uprising of 1857.

In the 1870s there was a good deal of distress and dissatisfaction in India. As Secretary to the Government Hume received information which persuaded him that the situation was alarming. In one of the memorandums, Hume describes in detail, how, about fifteen months before the end of Lord Lytton's administration, he got Very definite information about the seething discontent among the masses from some religious devotees. They approached him because they feared that the ominous unrest throughout the country which pervaded even the lowest strata of the population, would lead to some terrible, outbreak, destructive to India's future, unless men like him, who had access to the Government, could do something to remove the general feeling of despair and thus avert a catastrophe.

In order to avert a disaster of a great magnitude, Hume became convinced<sup>3</sup> that some definite action was necessary. However, he waited till his retirement from the Government service. In 1882 soon after, Hume seriously thought of finding ways and means to counteract the growing discontent among the people of India. As a preliminary approach, Hume thought of appealing the educated young men of the country. On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1883, he addressed an open letter to the graduates of the Calcutta University as largely representing the educated community in the country in this electrifying .appeal to the educated Indians Hume manifested the genuine heart-felt desire of a foreigner for the upliftment of India. In his appeal Hume said, 'whether in the individual or nation, all vital progress must spring from within, and n is to you, her most cultured and enlightened minds, her most favoured sons, that your country must look for the initiative'.. Emphasizing on the need to

form an organization, Hume continued, 'Scattered individuals, however, capable and however well-meaning, and are powerless singly. What needed is union, organization, and to secure these an association is required, armed and organized with unusual care, having for its object to promote the mental, moral, social and political regeneration of the people of India'. Hume further stated, if only fifty men, good and true, can be found to join as founders, the thing can be established and the future development will be comparatively easy. If you the picked men, the most highly educated of the nation, cannot, scorning personal ease and selfish objects, make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourself and your country, a more impartial administration, a larger share in the management of your own affairs, then at present at any rate, all hopes of progress are at an end, and India truly neither lacks nor deserves any better government than she now enjoys..'

This appeal of Hume was not made in vain. The men required as founders to initiate the movement were forthcoming from all parts of India. Encouraged by this response from the educated Indians Hume launched the 'Indian National Union'. In the summoning of the first Indian National Congress, the Indian National Union played an important role. The chief objectives of the Indian National Union were - (1) The fusion of all different elements of the population of India into one national whole, (2) the gradual regeneration of the nation thus evolved along all lines, spiritual, moral, social and political and (3) the consolidation of the union between England and India, by securing the modification of such of its conditions as may be unjust or injurious. The chief aim of the Indian National Union was defined in these terms to oppose, by all constitutional methods, all authorities high or low, here or in England, whose acts or omission is are opposed to the principles of the government of India laid down by the British Parliament and endorsed by the British Sovereign'.

Hume was busy maturing his plans for consolidating the network of contacts into the nucleus of a 'national party' while Lord Ripon was preparing to leave India in late 1884. Early in December 1884 Hume arrived in Bombay apparently to bid farewell to Ripon, and stayed on for about three months. During his stay in Bombay Hume discussed the programme of political action with the leaders of the Bombay Presidency. The leaders of this Presidency had manifested their political maturity during the last couple of years which had impressed friendly British observers. Even Lord Ripon in his private correspondence with colleagues in England had expressed his view that the 'intelligent natives of the Bombay Presidency are the best men in India'. He had great appreciation and praise of Bombay leaders such as V.N. Mandlik, P.M. Mehta, K.T. Telang, B. Tyabji and J.U. Yagnik. He also considered the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha as an 'influential body guided by

intelligent men'. Thus, from the end of 1883 onwards Hume increasingly came to rely more upon the leaders of Bombay than upon those of Calcutta.

While in Bombay, Hume discussed a number of subjects with the leaders. The important issues included, holding of an annual conference of representatives from all parts of India, setting up of a central 'National Association' to direct political activity throughout the country, preparation of a charter of Indian demands to be presented to the Parliament, establishment of a 'telegraphic agency' to dispatch news to the British press giving India's point of view and the formation of an 'Indian Party' in Parliament. Most of these subjects had acquired prominence during the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon and were being debated in the Indian press.

The sudden rise of Bombay as a prominent city in national politics in the early 1880s was mainly due to the leadership provided by P.M. Mehta, K.T. Telang and B. Tyabji. Being men of great talents following the legal profession, they represented the three main communities of the city. These so called 'brothers-in-law' gave a new dynamism to the public life of Bombay. They acutely felt the lack of a political organization to articulate their political views as the old Bombay Association had become defunct. Inspired by the presence of Hume in the city the 'legal trios' with adequate financial and popular support launched the Bombay Presidency Association on 31 January 1885.

Hume also had favourable opinion about the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha. Before he began his journey to Madras early in March 1885, Hume had already persuaded the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha to play host to the first Conference of the Indian National Union to be held in December 1885.

Leaving Bombay, Hume arrived in Madras early in March 1885. The Presidency town of Madras did not lack in political activity. The group of patriotic and dedicated men included G. Subramanian Aiyer, M. Viraghavachari, P. Ananda Charlu and Salem Ramaswami Mudaliar. There is no definite information about Hume's activities while he was in Madras. However, it can be safely presumed that his mission was to discuss with local leaders the political programme which he had already planned in consultation with the leaders of the Bombay presidency. He wanted to make sure that a sufficient number of delegates would attend the Conference of the Indian National Union to be held in Poona in, December 1885.

Soon after, Hume sailed to Calcutta from Madras on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1885. As in Bombay and Madras, Hume met a number of local leaders in Calcutta. On his way back to Simla from Calcutta in

April 1885, Hume visited several places in North-Western Provinces and Oudh and probably the Punjab.

After feeling the pulse of the educated Indian leaders in different parts of the country, Hume met the Governor-General Dufferin at Simla in early May 1885. He briefed the Governor-General about his proposed conference of representatives from all parts of India to be held in Poona in December 1885. Lord Dufferin took great interest in the matter, and after considering it for some time suggested to Hume that his project would be of no much use. The Governor General pointed out that there was no body of persons in India which performed the functions of the Opposition party in England. It would be very desirable in their interests as well as the interests of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respect the administration was defective and how it could be improved. He further pointed out that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the local Governor. He feared that in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds. Being convinced by Lord Dufferin's arguments Hume placed the two schemes, his own and Lord Dufferin's, before leading politicians in Calcutta, Bombay Madras and other parts of the country. These leaders unanimously accepted Lord Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it.

After his preliminary work in preparation for convening the conference of Indian leaders, Hume proceeded to England on 14 July 1885. He had three main objectives in visiting England- (1) to acquaint Liberal leaders in England with his project of the India National Union, (2) to organize an 'Indian party' in England to act as a pressure group for India both in and out of the Parliament and (3) to negotiate with the editors of British news-papers for the publication of news from India giving the Indian point of view. Hume met several members of the Parliament and many leading Liberals. Having made all arrangements in England, Hume returned to India before the Congress began.

### Check Your Progress

7. Bring out the role of Allan Octavian Hume in the foundation of Indian National Congress.

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## 10.8 THE FIRST SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS:

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The preparations for the first Congress had begun very early in 1885. The circular of invitation was issued in March 1885. It was decided to hold a conference at Poona from 25 to 31 December. It is interesting to note that the name 'Congress' was suggested only a few days before the meeting had taken place. The circular stated that the Conference should be composed of delegates, leading politicians well-acquainted with the English language, from all parts of the Bengal, Madras and Bombay Presidencies. The direct objects according to this circular were - (1) to enable all the most earnest labourers in the cause of national progress to become personally known to each other (2) to discuss and decide on the political aspirations to be undertaken during the ensuing year.

The circular further stated that, 'Indirectly this Conference will form the germ of a native parliament and if properly, conducted will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institutions.

Following the receipt of the circular special committees were formed in a number of towns and cities. These committees selected delegates from among themselves, who promised to attend the Conference.

Fate, however, deprived Poona of the honour of playing host to the First Session of the Indian National Congress - The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha had completed all arrangements for the intended Conference. But unfortunately only a few days before the Conference was to meet several cases of cholera were reported in Poona. According to the official report, which in the meantime had begun to call the Conference the 'Indian National Congress', it was decided to hold the Congress in Bombay. Through the efforts of the Bombay Presidency Association and the liberality of the managers of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College and Boarding Trust, everything was ready by the morning of the 27 December, 1885.

At 12 noon on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1885, the First Indian National Congress met in the hall of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College, above the Gowalia Tank, Mumbai. The total number of delegates who attended the session was 72. They were fairly representative of the different regions of India.

Dr. Annie Besant vividly described the scene of that august meeting in her book 'How India Wrought for Freedom' in the following words - 'The first voice's heard were those of Mr. A. O.

Hume, the 'Hon. Mr. S. Subramanian Aiyer and the Hon. Mr. K. T. Telang who proposed, seconded and supported the election of the first President, Mr. W.C. Bannerjee. A solemn and historic moment was that in which the first of the long line of men thus honoured by the Motherland took his seat to preside over the first national assembly'

In his opening remarks of the Presidential address, W.C. Bannerjee outlined the objects of the Congress - (1) the promotion of personal intimacy and friendship among all the most earnest workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire. (2) The eradication by direct, friendly, personal intercourse of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudices among all lovers of our country and the fuller development and consolidation of those settlements of national unity that had their origin in our beloved Lord Ripon's ever, memorable reign. (3) The authoritative record, after this has been clearly elicited by the fullest discussion, of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day. (4) The determination of the lines upon and methods by which during the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interests.

The nature of the resolutions passed at the first session of the Congress indicates the mind of these who had gathered on the occasion. The first session of the Congress discussed and passed nine resolutions. The chief among them were - (1) Appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of Indian administration. (2) Abolition of the Indian Council of the Secretary of State for India. (3) Expansion and reform of the Imperial and local Legislative Councils, established under the Indian Councils' Act, 1861. (4) Creation of Legislative Councils for the North-West Province and Oudh and the Punjab, and the creation of a Standing Committee in the House of Commons to consider formal protests from Councils. (5) Introduction of simultaneous Public Service Examinations in England and India and rising of the age of candidates. (6) Reduction of military expenditure- (7) Protest against the annexation of Upper Burma and the proposed incorporation of it with India. (8) That all the resolutions were to be sent to political associations all-over the country over discussion and formulation of views. (9) The next session of the Congress was to be held at Calcutta on 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1886.

The speeches of the delegates at the first session of Indian National Congress were characterized by moderation and extreme expression of loyalty, to the British Crown. In his Presidential address W.C. Bannerjee praised England for 'the inestimable blessing of western education' and said that, 'all they desired was that the basis of the government should be widened and that



'people should have their proper and legitimate share in it'. He also expressed his belief that the Congress would be equally advantageous to the authorities and to people.

The most impressive aspect of the first Congress was the far-sighted vision of speakers themselves. Though the Indian leaders had met for the first time on a political platform their knowledge of public questions of the day appeared to be thorough. They manifested remarkable knowledge of the administration in their speeches. Sir Dinshaw Wacha's speech on the army budget showed an intimate knowledge of the army finances. Other speakers included Subramanian Iyer, K.T.Telang, Narendranath Sen, Dadabhai Naoroji. Among the majority of the Congress leaders there was almost a childlike and pathetic belief in the fairplay of the British Parliament. Dadabhai Naoroji said, 'we are British subjects and subjects of the same gracious sovereign who has pledged her Royal word that we are to her as all her other subjects, and we have a right to ail British institutions. If we are true to ourselves and preserving ask what we desire, the British people are the very people on earth who will give us what is right and just'.

The first session of the Indian National Congress dissolved amid cheers for the Queen Empress. Hume,' after acknowledging the honour done to him said that as the giving of cheers had been entrusted to him, he must be allowed to propose the cheers to Her Most Gracious Majesty The Queen Empress.

### Check Your Progress

8. What were the aims objectives and resolutions of the Indian National Congress?

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### 10.9 SUMMARY:

After the failure of the Revolt of 1857, political nationalism developed in India. This new phase of political consciousness was manifested in the emergence of Political Associations. They were The British Indian Associations, The Indian Association, The Bombay Association, The Bengal British India Association, The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, The Mahajan Sabha of Madras and the National Conference. Due to these associations the All India National Congress was established on 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1885 at Bombay. Allan Octavian Hume was the focal features of the

Congress. Due to several cases of Cholera in Pune, the First Session of the Congress took place in the Hall of Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College, Gowalia Tank, Mumbai at 12 noon on 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1885, in the presence of 72 all India delegates. W.C. Bannerjee, the President of the first session declared the aims and objectives of the Congress and passed several resolutions in the same session.

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#### **10.10 QUESTIONS:-**

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1. Examine aims, objectives and limitations of the British India Association.
2. Assess the programmes and policies of the Indian associations.
3. Highlight the work of the Bombay Association.
4. Give an account of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and the mahajanaa sabha of madras.

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#### **10.11 ADDITIONAL READING:**

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1. A.R. Desai, Social Background of Indian Nationalism.
2. Anil Seal, The emergence of Indian nationalism.
3. Charles Heimsath, Indian nationalism and Social reform.  
Aditya Mukherjee, Imperialism, nationalism and the making of Indian capitalist class.



## RISE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

### (C2) The founding of Indian National Congress, its Policies and Programme

#### (i) Programmes and Policies of the Indian National Congress from 1885-1919

#### UNIT STRUCTURE:

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 British Attitude towards the Congress:
- 11.3 The Moderates
- 11.4 Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915)
- 11.5 The Extremists
- 11.6 Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920)
- 11.7 Summary
- 11.8 Questions
- 11.9 Additional Reading

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#### 11.0 OBJECTIVE:-

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the British attitude towards the Congress.
- Explain the programmes and policies of the moderate Congress.
- Perceive the contribution of G.K.Gokhale towards the Moderate Congress.
- Comprehend the rise of the Extremist Congress.
- Know the programmes and policies the Extremist congress.
- Understand the contribution B.G.Tilak towards the Extremist Congress.
- Explain about the first session of the Indian National Congress.

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## **11.1 INTRODUCTION:**

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The Provincial Associations provided regional forums to articulate the economic and political aspirations of the people in the respective areas. However, the politically conscious Indians gradually came to realize the need to organize an all-India forum. The educated Indians from different parts of the country increasingly became aware of the necessity to come together, formulate common programme of activity and carry on public education in order to create a broad based freedom struggle. These aspirations of the early visionary leaders led to the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885. With the establishment of the Indian National Congress the national movement and the struggle for freedom from the British rule was launched in an organized manner.

For more than twenty years following the foundation of the Indian National Congress the political life of the country was completely dominated by it. It also gave shape and form to the ideas of administrative and constitutional reforms which were the chief aspects of the political programme of the nationalists. However, it is not historically correct to say, that the history of the freedom struggle in India is nothing but the history of the Indian National Congress. In fact there were other forces and undercurrents at work which contributed to a considerable extent to the freedom struggle of the country. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the Indian National Congress was the paramount nationalist organization which led the country to its final liberation from the British yoke.

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## **11.2 BRITISH ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE CONGRESS:**

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From the beginning the British Government was hostile to the development of nationalists forces. It was very harsh on the Indian Press in 1878 when it had tried to spread nationalist consciousness through criticism of colonial policies. Lord Dufferin had looked with apprehension on the founding of the Indian National Congress. He had tried to divert the movement by suggesting to Hume that the Congress should devote itself to social rather than political affairs. However, the Congress leaders had refused to make the change. But still the British authorities had not adopted an openly hostile attitude towards the Congress. They were of the opinion that the Congress would confine itself with academic discussions. They were also willing to accommodate the more brilliant among the nationalist leaders with seats in the legislative councils and well-paid jobs in the judicial and other services.

The British authorities underestimated the potentiality of the Indian National Congress and other nationalist associations and persons and newspapers. The newspapers reached out to the people and the Congress began to publish popular pamphlets in Indian languages. Mass meetings were held to spread nationalist message. Thus, the Congress became a vehicle for the spread of political awareness among the people. The British could not tolerate this role of the Congress contrary to their, expectation. The economic agitation initiated by the nationalists exposed the real, exploitative nature of British imperialism. The resolutions reiterating the demand responsible government, the speeches criticizing government measures such as the condemnation of the imperialist forward policy and wars were most unpalatable to the British rulers.

Under these circumstances the British officials manifested a marked change in their attitude towards the Indian National Congress in particular and the entire nationalist fraternity in general. They began publicly to criticize and condemn the Congress. The nationalists were branded as 'disloyal babus', 'seditious Brahmins' and violent villains'. The Congress was painted as a 'factory of sedition' and the Congressmen as 'disappointed candidates for office and discontented lawyers who represent no one but themselves. In 1887, Lord Dufferin attacked the Congress in a public speech and ridiculed it as representing only 'a microscopic minority of the people'. He even reacted sharply to the Congress demands. He manifested contempt towards the Congress Secretary, Hume. In a letter to Henry Maine he remarked, 'There is a mischievous busybody of the name of Hume whom Lord Ripon rather feted and who seems to be one of the chief stimulators of the Indian Home Rule movement. He is a cleverish, a little cracked, vain unscrupulous man... very careless of truth'. Maine agreed that Indians were unfit for representative government, and gave many reasons why he thought so.

The Anglo-Indian Press was generally hostile towards the Congress. In one of its reports in January 1889, 'The Calcutta Review' observed, 'The Congress then is something more than a Political Club. It is a revolutionary League... It is obvious that agitation is on foot which may in certain events lead to the most serious consequences to the government and the country'. It is important to note that the Anglo-Indian Press was merely the mouthpiece of official policy towards the Congress.

Lord Salisbury, who had been the Secretary of State for India from 1874 and Prime-Minister from 1886 to 1892, expressed his opposition to the Congress in a memorandum in 1888 regarding the granting of legislative powers to elected councillors. He wrote - 'I think I am not wrong in assuming that the men who will be brought to the fore by this plan will be Bengali lawyers, agents, news-paper

writers. In India they are the class among whom disaffection is the strongest, and they are most competent to use the weapon which membership to a legislative council would place in their hands to embarrass and damage the government. I cannot conceive the object of introducing this dangerous principle into the constitution of the proposed Council Bill introduced by Lord Cross in the House of Lords in 1890. He contemptuously commented on the application of the principle of election to India - 'The principle of election or government by representation is not an Eastern idea it does not fit in, Eastern minds'

The Viceroy who succeeded Lord Dufferin and the Secretaries of State for India continued the traditional hostile policy towards the Congress. George Hamilton, the Secretary of State wrote to Lord Elgin the Viceroy on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1896 - 'It is gratifying to note that Congress as a political power, has steadily gone down during the last few years, and this I think, largely due to the indifference and unconcern with which the government has tolerated its proceedings. Writing again to Lord Elgin on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1897, Hamilton observed - 'The more I see and hear of the National Congress Party, the more I am impressed with the seditious and double sided character of the prime-movers of the organization'.

Hamilton was curious enough to speak about the decline of the power of the Congress. Still he was very anxious to suppress its influence. Writing to the Viceroy, Lord Curzon on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1899, and Hamilton suggested three measures to counteract congress activities. - (1) to find out amongst the princes and noblemen who subscribed to the Congress fund and letting them to know that the Government was aware of the fact. (2) To confer honors and distinction on those persons who were not Congressmen. (3) To exercise a greater control over education, its organization and text books.

The manner in which Lord Curzon followed the instructions of Hamilton may be judged from his activities such as the Universities Act of 1904. On 18<sup>th</sup> November 1900, Lord Curzon wrote to Hamilton - 'My own belief is that the Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my greatest ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise. The Government followed various methods and policies to curb the influence of the Indian National Congress. It adopted the policy of favoring the anti-congress elements and putting pressure on the rich and the aristocracy, who could be easily persuaded to withdraw their patronage from the Congress. The Government met with remarkable success in this regard. However, this unholy conspiracy between the British and Indian authorities against the Congress could not achieve its object. They did not realize that the Congress derived its real strength and support from the middle class and not from the wealthy and aristocracy.

To counteract the growing influence of the Indian National Congress the British authorities adopted the policy of 'divide and rule'. They realized that the growing unity of the Indian people was a major threat to their rule in India. In a sinister move the British authorities encouraged Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Raja Siva Prasad and other pro-British individuals to start an anti-Congress movement. They also tried to a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims. They promoted communal rivalry among the educated Hindus and Muslims on the question of government jobs. Attempts were also made to split the nationalist ranks by adopting a more friendly approach towards the more conservative or moderate sections. Leaders belonging to the older associations like the British Indian Association were sought to be appeased and turned against the 'radical' Congress leaders.

'Carrot and stick' was the other policy adopted by the British authorities to minimize the influence of the Congress. The more moderate sections of the nationalist opinion were appeased by making concessions on the maximum age of recruitment to the Indian Civil service, providing larger openings to Indians in other Government services, widening the scope of local municipal government and passing the Indian Council Act of 1892. Meanwhile a policy of repression was followed to frighten the weak hearted nationalists. Viceroy Lord Elgin openly threatened Indians in 1898 with the declaration, 'India was conquered by the sword and by the sword it shall be held'. A powerful attack was launched on the nationalists in Western India with the arrest of Tilak and other leaders. In 1898 laws were enacted to suppress freedom of the Press and speech and increasing the powers of the police and magistrates.

The reactionary policies of the British authorities were manifested in their belief that the spread of education had been a major cause of the growth of nationalism. Attempts were made to impose greater government control over it and to change its modern and liberal character. The government decided to promote private colleges run by religious trusts. Modern secular education which led to the spread of national, democratic and nationalist ideas was sought to be replaced by a system based on religious and moral teaching. Even though based on Indian religions and glorification of Indian culture, this new system was reactionary as it did not cultivate a forward looking and modern spirit among the young. This hypocritical policy shows how by the end of the nineteenth century the British imperialism was willing to join hands with the socially and intellectually reactionary forces. The British Government no longer had any reservation about revivalism and conservatism.

The above observations undoubtedly explode the myth that the Indian National Congress was started by A.O. Hume and others under the official direction, guidance and advice of no less a person than Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, to provide a safe, mild, peaceful, and constitutional outlet or 'safety valve' for the rising discontent among the masses, which was inevitably leading towards a popular and violent revolution. Right from the beginning of its inception the Indian National Congress was looked upon by the British authorities as a great menace to the security of their Indian empire. Thus the Congress became almost a nightmare with the British authorities and they adopted all possible policies and measures to suppress the organization. However, in spite of all this the Indian National Congress not only survived but emerged as a strong national movement that proved to be the nemesis of the British Empire in India.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1) Explain the British attitude towards the All India National Congress.

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### 11.3 THE MODERATES:

With the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885, the struggle for India's freedom was launched in an organized manner. The Congress provided a common platform for the nationalist leaders from different parts of the country to meet and voice their grievances and place their demands before the British Government.

The early Indian leadership represented by people like Dadabhai Naoroji, Justice M. G. Ranade, Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale came to be described as 'Moderates'. These and other moderate leaders, fascinated by British parliamentary institutions hoped to introduce such institutions in India, gradually and through constitutional methods. They were reformers and not revolutionaries. The beneficence of British rule was the starting point the foundation of their political philosophy, but yet they labored ceaselessly for the liberalization of that rule. The moderates voiced the demands of the English educated class which was drawn mainly from Bengal, Bombay and Madras, where English education was first introduced.



It was the method of political work of the early nationalists that earned them the epithet of 'moderates'. These methods can be summed up briefly as 'constitutional agitation' within the four corners of the law. They believed that their main task was to educate people in modern politics and arouse national consciousness and to create a united public opinion on political questions. For this purpose the moderates adopted several methods. They held public meetings, made speeches, passed resolutions setting forth popular demands. Through the press the moderates carried on a daily critique of the government. They also sent a number of memorials and petitions to high government officials and even to the British Parliament.

A second objective of the early nationalist leaders was to influence the British Government and the British public opinion to introduce the necessary reforms in various fields of administration. The moderates believed that the British were unaware of the real conditions of India. They therefore made all out efforts to enlighten the British public opinion through memorials and petitions and by carrying on an active political propaganda in England. Dadabhai Naoroji, who in 1865 settled in England, laboured there for about four decades for the Indian cause. He submitted numerous petitions and memoranda to the government, read diverse articles, mainly on economic matters, before learned societies, and agitated privately and publicly for the Indianisation of services and the liberalization of administration.

The moderates wanted to remake India in the image of the west. They considered the coming of the British as beneficial and providential. They wanted to use the British connection in their attempts to reform contemporary Indian society. They also came to be known as 'Western Reformists'.

The western concept of self-government, colonial or otherwise was the political goal of the moderates. This goal was to be achieved through a gradual process based on the principle first deserve and then desire. The moderates frankly realized that India could learn the proper use of western political institutions only after it had undergone, under the British tutelage, a certain period of political apprenticeship. They also believed that the political reforms should be introduced in India in installments and that the next installment should depend upon the performance of the first installment.

The moderates have been considered the pioneers of nationalism in India. They tried for the first time to weld India into a nation. The British government created a geographical unity and the moderates created a 'we-sentiment' in India. They created a loyalty for the land irrespective of the fact whether one was a

Parsee, a Christian, a Muslim or a Hindu. They infact, said that a Parsee should be a better Parsee, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Hindu a better Hindu, the more he was attached to his country and the more he was bound in brotherly affection and relations to all the children of the soil. They considered themselves Indian first and Hindus, Muslims or Christians only afterwards. They preached and practiced a secular type of nationalism in India. Such an idea of nationalism was completely alien to India. It was a western importation and it was based on the imitation of the western idea of the nation.

The moderates were of the opinion that India needed a balanced and lucid presentation of its needs before the Englishmen and their Parliament. Most of them came from the upper strata of Indian society and were in most cases the product of western education. The moderates had faith in British fairplay and justice and believed that India's connection with the west, through England was a boon rather than a curse. They honestly believed that the British had given the Indians a progressive civilization. The English literature, the system of education, justice and local bodies were regarded as some of the invaluable blessings of the British Raj. Thus, loyalty to the British Crown was the keynote of the early Congressmen. The moderates believed that the interest of India and England were allied rather than antagonistic. These were the misconceptions and they became the obsessions of the moderate school. It was on the basis of these obsessions that the moderate believed in the method of prayers and petitions. This method was dubbed by the extremists as 'mendicancy' and was described as the process of 'licking the dust of the feet that kick'.

The Indian moderates have been described as the counterparts of the English liberals in India. The English liberal tradition in general and the political philosophy of J.S. Mill in particular was their source of inspiration. They had their best friends and allies in the liberals of England. They rejoiced and overwhelmed whenever the Liberal party came to power in England. They looked upon the English liberals as their future emancipators. They had a liberal outlook and a liberal approach to questions social and political.

The moderate believed in agitating for gradual reforms. They were content with pleading for reforms in administration, that is, in councils, in services, in local bodies, in defense services etc. The moderates wanted to avoid conflict with the British Government. They avoided violence and followed the method of prayer, petition, representation and deputations in order to convince the government about the validity of their just demands. It was an article of faith with Gokhale that the means employed for achieving an objective should be as pure as the objective itself. The

moderates remained loyal to this principle throughout the period they were in control of the Congress.

The growing poverty of India attracted the attention, of the moderates. They linked the impoverishment of India to the economic exploitation of the country by the British. Dadabhai Naoroji was one of the first moderate leaders who pointed out the root cause of India's poverty and traced it to the drain of India's wealth.. He wrote 'Poverty and un-British Rule in India', in which he propounded his theory of drain. The drain theory was one of the earliest attempts to expose the nature and impact of imperialism which was a product of capitalism of the nineteenth century.

The moderates 'suggested the modernization of Indian life in all fields, specially the development of modern industry as a remedy for the eradication of poverty. They popularized the concept of 'Swadeshi' as a means of promoting Indian industries. They also carried on a continuous agitation for the reduction of heavy land revenue demand and asked for a radical change in the existing pattern of taxation and expenditure. They urged the government to provide cheap credit to the peasants through state sponsored agricultural banks and to make available large scale irrigation facilities. The moderates demanded abolition of salt tax and other taxes which affected the poor and the lower middle classes. They were critical of the high government expenditure on the army that was employed to maintain England's domination in Asia and Africa.

Administrative reforms were one of the significant demands of the moderates. They put forward their demand for increasing Indianisation of the higher grades of administrative services. They criticized the oppressive and tyrannical behaviour of the police and government officials towards common people. The moderates demanded the separation of the executive from the judiciary. They expressed their displeasure at the delays in the administration of law and the high cost of the judicial process. They opposed the aggressive foreign policy of the British government against India's neighbours. The moderates emphasized the need for the spread of education among the masses. They also took up the cause of the plantation workers. They demanded freedom of speech and abolition of press censorship.

The moderates believed that India should eventually move towards democratic self-government. However, they did not demand immediate fulfillment of this goal. They suggested a step by step approach to attain self and responsible government. Their immediate political demands were extremely moderate. They demanded the extension of the existing central and provincial legislative councils with greater number of non-official Indians and the introduction of the principle of election. Along with this they also

demanding the widening of the powers of these councils and an increase in the powers of the members to discuss the budget and to question and criticize the day to day administration. At the turn of the century the moderates began to demand full self government including full Indian control over all legislation and finance on the model of the self governing colonies of Canada and Australia.

The moderates achieved partial success when under popular pressure the British Government amended the old provisions and passed the new Indian Councils Act, 1892. This Act increased the number of non-official members, a few of them were to be indirectly elected. Members of the Council were granted right to speak on the budget. However, they were denied the right to vote upon it. These meagre reforms left the moderates utterly discontented.

### Check Your Progress

Q.2 Discuss the policies and programmes of the Moderates.

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## **11.4 GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE (1866-1915) :**

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was one of the great leaders among the moderates. He was a great exponent of Indian liberalism. He came from a Maharashtrian Chitpavan Brahmin Family. He joined the Deccan Education Society in Poona at a very young age of nineteen. He took a vow of poverty and dedicated himself to the service of the nation. In 1905, Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society to train young men to work for the country. The members of the Society were required to be loyal to the British Empire, to promote political education, encourage cordial relations between communities, assist educational movements and work for upliftment of the depressed classes.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale's approach was moderate in relation to politics. However, he was radical in matters of social reform. In this respect his approach was fundamentally different from that of Tilak, who was an extremist in politics but moderate on the question of social reform. Gokhale was of the opinion that even for political progress the elimination of caste system and the liberalization of social life were essential. Gokhale bluntly stated that Indians could not complain of discrimination by Europeans in South Africa unless

they ceased to discriminate against their own 'low caste' countrymen.

Gokhale spoke of the Swadeshi movement in sympathetic terms at the 1905 Congress session. The problem, however, arose with regard to the boycott of British goods, which Tilak and extremists wanted but about which Gokhale was not enthusiastic. He was also not in favour of boycotting the visit of the Prince of Wales to India. It was chiefly due to the efforts of Gokhale that no resolution for boycotting the visit of the Prince of Wales was passed, but a resolution demanding the annulment of partition and also favouring boycott of British goods 'was accepted.

Constitutional agitation was the basic faith of Gokhale. He believed that through such agitation the government could 'learn about the aspirations of the reformers, and the reformers in turn, could educate the people. Gokhale was a constitutionalist and a consummate parliamentarian. He was elected to the legislative council of Bombay at the age of twenty-two and to the Imperial Legislative Council at the age of thirty-six. He distinguished himself in these councils by his speeches on the budget. In 1911 Gokhale introduced a bill for making primary education compulsory. However, the bill was rejected because of the opposition from the government.

Constitutionalism and liberalism flourished in England because the English people enjoyed parliamentary democracy and the British constitution provided a method of bringing about peaceful changes. But India had no parliamentary democracy. Thus, constitutional agitation could not possibly be as effective in India as it was in England. Yet moderates like Gokhale had a great faith in the reasonableness of their cause and the sense of justice of the British rulers. Gokhale derived inspiration from English liberals such as Gladstone and Morley, and he strongly criticized the Conservative Viceroy, Lord Curzon, whom he compared with Aurangzeb.

Though Indians tried not to get themselves involved in British party politics, they could not ignore the fact that most of the sympathizers of the Congress were liberals and not Tories. But though Gokhale relied on the British liberals, he was not sparing in his criticism of British rule, and in order to explain the poverty of India, like Dadabhai Naoroji, he also referred to the drain of her wealth to imperial Britain. Gokhale also criticized the use of Indian troops for imperial purposes, and the use of India as a base for military operations against neighbouring countries such as Tibet, Afghanistan, Persia and Burma. Time and again Gokhale criticized the policy of the exclusion of Indians from offices of high trust and position.

Gokhale was very much impressed by the British ideas of moderation and peaceful evolution. He was profoundly influenced by Burke's exhortation to reform and not to destroy. He knew Burke's 'Reflections on the French Revolution' by heart. Burke's condemnation of the excess of the French Revolution was to him the final estimate and ultimate verdict on all revolutions. To him Revolution meant not so much the fall of the Bastille as the Reign of Terror, and he feared that Revolution in India would only result in anarchy. In 1909 he said that the old public life in India was based on a frank and total acceptance of British rule due to recognition of the fact that it alone could secure to the country peace and order. He was of the opinion that British rule, in spite of its inevitable drawbacks, had, on the whole, been a great instrument of progress. Accordingly he claimed that what was needed was a government 'national in spirit though foreign in personnel, a government which subordinates all other considerations to the welfare of the Indian people'. In July 1909 Gokhale even said that as British rule alone stood between order and anarchy 'only mad men outside the lunatic asylums could think or talk of independence'.

Gokhale was bitterly opposed to aggressive political action. He lacked bitterness, and the recklessness of a revolutionary. W.S. Blunt, who had travelled widely in India, found Gokhale a well-bred, highly educated and intelligent man who expressed himself well in English, 'But he is clearly no leader of a revolution, and they will effect nothing without one. He lacks the enthusiasm which a belief in ultimate success would give..'.

Gokhale remained a moderate throughout his life and when the extremists talked of passive resistance and of 'universal boycott' of British rule, he opposed it saying that it was preposterous that anybody could imagine such a thing to be feasible then. He observed that if the extremists resorted to non-payment of taxes, a form of passive resistance, 'they would soon find out where they stood and how far they were supported'. Though Gokhale did not approve of passive resistance in India, it is surprising that he commended the same when Gandhi adopted it in South Africa. When Gandhi came to India from South Africa he met Gokhale, and the latter's doctrine of spiritualization of politics went straight to his heart. Gandhi also accepted Gokhale's view that violence should be eschewed, but otherwise, Gandhi's method was nearer the method of direct action and passive resistance of extremists such as Tilak than the constitutional method of Gokhale.

Gandhi was personally attracted more to Gokhale than to any other leader. Pherozshah Mehta seemed to Gandhi like the Himalayas, Tilak like the ocean, but Gokhale was as the Ganges. The Himalayas were unshakable, but the Ganges invited one to its bosom, Gandhi wrote, 'in the sphere of politics the place Gokhale

occupied in my heart during his life time occupies even now was is absolutely unique'

Gokhale was impressed by Gandhi's spiritual depth. Only two men had affected him spiritually in the manner that Gandhi did, namely, Dadabhai Naoroji and Ranade. In 1909 Gokhale described Gandhi as a man among men' a hero among heroes a patriot among patriots'. He confided to M.R. Jayakar that Gandhi would be 'in the vanguard of a great movement when some of us are gone'.

Though Gokhale had a very high opinion about Gandhi, it is an irony of fate that he could not find a place for him in his Servants of India Society. Gandhi having completed the year of travel prescribed by Gokhale sought admission to the Society. But it became clear that there were deep differences between the approaches of Gandhi and those of the members of the Society. It was anticipated Gandhi's political evolution would take him further away from the Society. While refusing Gandhi admission Gokhale told him, 'But whether you are formally admitted as a member or not, I am going to look upon as one',

Though the moderates believed in constitutional agitation, they failed to organize a nation-wide and continue agitation even on this limited basis. The movement did not yet have a wide appeal. The leadership was confined to professional groups such as lawyers, doctors, journalists, teachers and a few merchants and landowners. The moderate leaders lacked political faith in the masses they believed that the Indian masses lacked the character and capacity to take part in modern politics and to wage a successful struggle against the most powerful imperialist power of the day.

The achievements of the moderates were rather meagre. Very few of the reforms for which they agitated were introduced by the government. However, it is important to note that the moderates succeeded in creating awareness among the masses. The moderate leaders popularized among the people the ideas of democracy and civil liberty. They exposed the true nature of the British imperialism. In spite of their many failures, the moderates laid a strong foundation for the national movement.

### Check Your Progress

Q.3 Write a note on Gopal Krishna Gokhale as a leader of the moderates.

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## 11.5 THE EXTREMISTS:

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The first twenty years of the twentieth century represents the second phase of Indian national movement and the growth of the Congress. During this period, politics became radicalized and revolutionized and the Congress was split into two groups. The official Congress was led by moderates like Pherozshah Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale. One section led by Bal Gangadhar 'Tilak, left Congress in 1907 at Surat. This paved the way for a radical movement popularly known as extremist movement, which was led by Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal.

The events of the period between 1896 and 1908 radicalized the Indian politics. The ground was prepared for extremist nationalism. Infact, the movement in favour of extremist nationalism started building up towards the close of the nineteenth century. Some of the causes for the development of extremist trend in politics may be summarized as the following –

- (1) At the close of the nineteenth century, the sufferings and miseries of the people increased more than ever before. From 1896 to 1900, prolonged and disastrous, famines devastated the country. One fourth of the population suffered from the famine that occurred in 1899. Bubonic plagues took a heavy toll of life in 1896. People faced poverty, starvation, disease and death. Hundreds of thousands of people perished. In the words of the Famine Commissioner, 'people died like flies'. The people realized more than ever before the steady exploitation under the British imperialism.
- (2) The economic policies of the government ruined the Indian economy. According to Dadabhai Naoroji, 'the British rule reduced' India to material and moral wretchedness'. The excise duty on Indian cotton was imposed to safeguard Lancashire textile industry at the cost of Indian textile industry. The government imposed heavy punitive fines in disturbed areas. With price rise, unemployment tended to grow increasing number of poor.
- (3) The anti-British feelings were further roused by the treatment meted out to Indians in British colonies in Africa, especially in South-Africa, where they were treated as social sub-castes. They were given discriminatory treatment and regarded as lower type of human being as compared Englishmen. In some places they could not even walk on footpaths, could not travel in first or second class compartments of railways and could not go out of their houses after nine o'clock in the night. They could not own or build houses in certain localities exclusively



reserved for the Europeans. They were barred from Certain hotels, hospitals and schools. Thus, Indians were abused and subjected to a variety of other indignities.

- (4) Lord Curzon's administration was despotic and bureaucratic. In an address to the Europeans, Lord Curzon said, 'your work is administration, your work is exploitation' He officialized Universities, reduced popular elements in the Calcutta Corporation and made many insulting remarks against the Indian people.
- (5) Lord Curzon was also responsible for the partition of Bengal in 1905 on the pretext of administrative expediency. However, the extremists considered this act as an attack on the solidarity of Bengali nationalism. The partition of Bengal sowed the seeds of communalism and separatism. The partition also led to extremist political movement. Swadeshi and boycott were adopted as political instruments to fight against, partition of Bengal.
- (6) Events in many foreign countries during this period also gave impetus to the growth of extremist nationalism in India. The emergence of Japan as a modern, powerful country after 1868 gave a new hope to Indians. Japan had proved that even a backward Asian country could become strong through its own efforts. In less than fifty years Japan had become an industrial nation and a strong military power. The defeat of a European power, Russia by Japan, a small Asian nation, infused a new spirit of self- confidence among Indians. If Japan could defeat a mighty power like Russia, could not Indians expel a few Englishmen ruling in their country. The widespread revolutions in countries such as China against the European imperialists in 1900, the revolution in Iran in 1906 and the Turkish revolution in 1908, gave a new hope and new urge to liberate the country.
- (7) Many extremists were great inspired by the Italian patriot, Mazzini. Lala Lajpat Rai, who published a life of Mazzini said, 'I made Mazzini my guru'. To the extremists the appeal of Mazzini lay not merely in his patriotism but even more in his revolutionary methods. The story of how the Italians had driven the Austrians out of their land gave the extremists a new conception and a new ideal of complete independence. Self-government under British paramountcy had been the goal of the moderates, but the extremists wanted complete autonomy and elimination of all foreign control.

These above factors led to the emergence of a new spirit of nationalism, the spirit of revolt against liberalism and constitutional

methods of the moderates. The leaders of the new spirit - Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Aurobindo Ghose advocated stronger agitation and mass action. They lost all faith in the efficacy of constitutional approach to political questions, which they began to think, could bear fruit only in a democracy where the government was responsible to the people. Ending and not mending of the British rule became their objective.

The extremists differed in many ways in ideology and action from the moderates. Unlike the moderates the extremists did not want to reconstruct India in the image of the west. They did not have an exaggerated admiration for the British connection, with India nor did they accept British Raj as providential. The extremist leaders looked more to the past history of India than to the west. They believed that the Golden Age of Indian history existed somewhere in the glorious past of India. Therefore they advised the revival of ancient ideas and institutions. They did not want to reform contemporary conditions in modern India on the lines suggested by a study of the history of ancient India. It is in this sense that the extremist leaders were dubbed as 'revivalists' in contrast to the moderates who were described as western reformists.

The extremist leaders accepted Swaraj as their political goal. It was their natural right and was to be achieved at all cost. As explained by the extremist leaders, the concept of Swaraj was a Vedic concept and it was a spiritual concept. Swaraj was, according to the classical Indian value system, a moral imperative for the Indians. It was integrally associated with the Hindu concept of Dharma Rajya and establishment of Dharma Rajya was not possible without Swaraj.

In contrast with the constitutional agitation of the moderates, the extremist leaders believed in militant methods. It was realized that the old methods of mendicancy could not prove to be effective. Appeals and memoranda felt on deaf ears, and speeches and resolutions 'in the Councils hardly mattered. The British Government was ruling with an iron hand. Exploitation was increasing every day and was sucking the blood of the Indian masses.

The extremists wanted the Congress to proclaim 'self-government' as its political aim and to organize the masses to exercise popular pressure on the British Government to face it to concede Indian demands. 'Self-government is our goal, we want a control over our administrative machinery,' said Tilak.

The extremists proposed three methods to achieve their objective of self-government - Swadeshi, boycott and national

education. It meant passive resistance. For the extremists Swadeshi and boycott were the precursors to non-cooperation and passive resistance. The people were asked to exercise self denial in such a way as not to assist the government to rule. 'We shall not assist them to collect revenue and keep peace. We shall not assist them in fighting beyond the frontiers or outside India with Indian blood and money. We shall not assist them in carrying on administration of justice. We shall have our own courts, and when time comes we shall not pay taxes..'

Bipin Chandra Pal wanted to dispel the illusion or the Maya to kill and destroy the hypnotism that the British rule was invincible and that the Indians were weak as against the British rulers. He introduced a spiritual element in politics and emphasized that only spiritually elevated people could fight out the debased British community. According to him, the extremist movement was not merely a political movement, and not even a mere economic movement, but essentially a spiritual movement.

The partition of Bengal raised the political temper of the country. The adoption of Swadeshi and boycott of British goods were employed as new methods of struggle. The division between the moderates and extremists became sharp at the annual session of the Congress at Banaras (1905). The moderates introduced a resolution to welcome the Prince of Wales, who was to visit India in 1906. The extremists opposed the resolution. However, a compromise was reached and the resolution was passed in the absence of the extremists. It did not pass the resolution of passive resistance as put forward by Tilak.

In 1906, the anti-partition agitation was in full swing. Swadeshi and boycott were widely used. The extremists were in the forefront of the anti-partition agitation. At the Calcutta session of the Congress (1906) Bipin Chandra Pal proposed Tilak for Presidentship of the All India Congress Committee. However, Tilak was not acceptable to the moderates. They invited Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, to preside. In spite of this setback the extremists gained all their points. Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh, in his reception address said, 'Freedom is the breath of our life... we stand for liberty, our policy is the policy of freedom' Four resolutions on boycott, Swadeshi, swaraj and national education were adopted. Dominion status was declared to be the political goal of the Congress.

In spite of adopting the extremist agenda for agitation at the Calcutta session of the Congress, the moderates did not work actively during the anti-partition movement. The extremists had become restless. Lord Minto announced his proposals for Council reforms. As the moderates were in contact with the viceroy, the

extremists became suspicious. They tried once again to capture the Congress leadership at the Surat session of the Congress (1907). This resulted in the split in the Congress. At the Surat session of the Congress, there were differences of opinion over the election of the president. The convention was that the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the session should be elected president of the next session. Accordingly, Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh should have been elected. The extremists had no faith in him. They demanded an open election and proposed the name of Lala Lajpat Rai. However, he refused to accept the Presidentship. Surendranath Banerjee proposed the name of Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh. Motilal Nehru seconded it. Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh took the chair. Soon after chaos followed Tilak came to the platform and wanted to move an amendment. But he was not allowed to address the delegates. What followed were a free for all and a scuffle. The president declared the meeting as closed. The moderates met separately and adopted the Congress constitution and closed the doors to those who did not believe in the constitutional methods. The extremists had to remain outside the fold of Congress till 1916, when as a result of the efforts of Dr. Annie Besant, there was a reunion between the moderates and the extremists. The Surat episode has been described by Dr. Annie Besant as the 'saddest episode in the history of the Congress'.

### Check Your Progress

Q 4. Enumerate circumstances that led to the emergence of the Extremist Congress.

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## 11.6 BAL GANGADHAR TILAK (1856-1920) :

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, popularly known as the Lokmanya, was born in a Chitpavan Brahmin family of Maharashtra. He was a scholar, journalist, educator and the leader of the extremist section of the Indian National Congress. He was regarded as the 'Father of Indian Unrest'. He was a mass leader and the first who converted the Indian national Congress into a mass organization.

Tilak helped in the establishment of the Poona New English School in 1800 and later the Deccan Education Society and Ferguson College. But in '1890, due to differences with regard to social reform, he severed his connection with the Deccan Education Society. Tilak, who considered that political freedom should precede social reform, clashed with Gokhale and Agarkar who believed that social reform was equally, if not more, necessary

than political reform. Tilak did not consider social and political reforms to be interlinked. He felt that excessive emphasis on social reform would divide the nationalists, anti-imperialist forces.

Tilak differed fundamentally from the moderates who were impregnated with Victorian ideals of liberalism and secularism. He did not separate religion from politics. In fact he sought to revive the Maratha politico-religious tradition, and resorted to mystical quasi-religious appeal. Tilak was a revivalist and a revivalist in the sense that he wanted revive all that was good and noble in India's culture and civilization. He himself was a great scholar of Sanskrit and a student of ancient Indian history and culture.

In order to energize nationalism with the dynamite of religion, Tilak wanted to utilize religious festivals. In September 1896 he said that better results could be achieved through these festivals than through meetings. He wanted to give the bigger festivals the shape of huge mass meetings and thus to introduce political activities in the villages and among the illiterate. From 1893 Tilak began to encourage the festival of Ganapati. He also encouraged the formation of anti-cow killing societies, lathi clubs and 'akharas'. After the Ganapati festival became popular, in 1895 he started festivals in honour of Shivaji, the Maratha chief who was largely responsible for liberating Maharashtra from the Mughal rule.

The writer of an authoritative biography on Tilak published by the Kesari Maratha Trust tells us that the sources of inspiration for Tilak to start the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals were not Indian. He tells us how the study of Greek history and the idea of Olympic Games contained therein led to the organization of Ganapati festivals and how the inauguration of the Shivaji festival had his origin in the attitude of hero worship borrowed by Tilak from Carlyle and Emerson. Moreover, Tilak in his college days had devoted much of his time in the study of western writers like Hegel, Kant, Spencer, Mill, Bentham, Voltaire and Rousseau.

Tilak propagated his nationalistic views through the Marathi weekly, the 'Kesari', and the English newspaper, the 'Mahratta', which he started in 1880. The stirring and patriotic articles that he wrote in the 'Kesari' soon attracted government's attention. In 1882, on a charge of publishing subversive articles, he was sentenced to imprisonment for four months. Again in 1897 after the assassination of Rand, the Plague Commissioner and his assistant Lt. Ayerst in Poona, the government accused Tilak of having fomented, through his articles, the spirit of sedition and violence. He was tried and was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for eighteen months. Later, in September 1898 he was released because of ill-health.

Being out of prison, Tilak engaged himself in political activities with renewed vigour. Because of his aggressive politics he came into conflict with the moderates. Differences between the moderates and extremists finally led to the split in the Congress at the Surat session (1907).

In 1908 Tilak was again charged with sedition. After the trial he was sentenced to six years rigorous imprisonment and was sent to Mandalay prison. This was followed by serious disturbances. Valentine Chirol, who visited India, then, described Tilak as the 'Father of Indian Unrest. Aurobindo Ghose claimed that Tilak had 'used methods which Indianised the movement and brought in the masses'.

While in the Mandalay prison in Burma, Tilak wrote 'The Arctic Home of the Vedas' and the 'Gita Rahasya'. Tilak considered that the real message of the Gita was more a call to action as was propagated in its opening parts than renunciation as stated in its later parts. He claimed that the Gita had preached a gospel of incessant activity. A similar interpretation was later given by Aurobindo Ghose. Tilak a political realist, found in the Gita not only inspiration for action but justification, in a righteous cause, for violent action also.

During the anti-partition movement Tilak demanded swaraj or self- government, claiming that no piecemeal reform will do. He was of the opinion that the existing system was ruinous and had to be replaced altogether. For Tilak swaraj was the birthright of every Indian. The word swaraj is an old Vedic term and in Tilak's value system swaraj was a moral necessity. Swaraj was not only a right but also a dharma, duty.

It is important to note that Tilak began as a moderate. During his phase of moderatism he had said that he did not desire to weaken the government, but to render it impregnable to all assaults whether from Russian or any other foe. To ensure this he asked for greater association of Indians in the administration. However, his expectations were not fulfilled. Writing in the Kesari in January 1897 he said that for the last twelve years Indians had been shouting hoarse about their grievances, but such shouting had no more affected the government than the sound of a gnat. But even then about this time, Tilak advocated only strong constitutional methods and not passive resistance. But by the middle of the first decade of this century, Tilak's attitude changed altogether and he advocated the adoption of the fourfold programme of swaraj, Swadeshi, national education and boycott. He then asserted that the political salvation of India lay not in supplication but in self-assertion, but in submission but in direct action.

Tilak was a perpetual fighter. He fought the British government and the old guard of the Congress, such as Pherozshah Mehta and Gokhale, as also the social reformers such as Ranade and Bhandarkar. He fought with his pen, through the press, and from the platform. He also fought through his sedition trials. Every sedition trial increased his popularity and he came to be known as 'Lokmanya' (honoured by the people).

Tilak, who advocated a policy of non-cooperation with the British government, poured ridicule on the moderates saying that their policy of three 'P's - Pray, Please, and Protest' - would never be effective. According to Tilak the agitation of the moderates based on the so called constitutional method was a sheer waste of time, as Indians had no democratic constitution through which they could effect real changes. Tilak claimed that if Indians did not cooperate with the administration then they could make their power felt, and become free.

Tilak was released from Mandalay jail in 1914, when the First World War broke out. On 30 August 1914 in the letter in 'The Mahratta' he exhorted his countrymen to rush to the defense of Britain which had been compelled to take arms in defense of weaker states. Tilak had hoped that the government would reciprocate this gesture. But the government did not. This changed Tilak's mood. In 1916 he formed a League to fight for home rule.

At this stage, however, Tilak's attitude to colonial self-government was radically different from his earlier attitude. Now he said, 'Indians did want English people, institutions, English liberty and empire'. The meaning of Swarajya he declared in 1916, is the retention of our Emperor or and the rule of the English people, and the full possession by the people of the authority to manage the remaining affairs'. To put it more simply, 'The swaraj of today is within the empire and not independent of it'. This approach of Tilak was shared by other Home Rule leaders such as Dr. Annie Besant, Subramanian Iyer and C. R. Das.

In 1916 Tilak and the extremists rejoined the Congress. He also approved of the Congress-League Pact of 1916. The extremist nationalists had added a glorious chapter to the history of the national movement in India. They had clarified their objective, taught the people self-confidence and self-reliance and prepared the social base of the movement to include the lower middle class, students, youth and women. New methods of political organization and new modes of waging political struggles had been introduced. At the same time certain old weaknesses had persisted. The mass of the common people, workers and peasants were still outside the mainstream of national politics. In spite of heroic talk of efforts at organizing mass struggles such struggles were on the whole absent. Passive resistance and non-cooperation remained mere

ideas. The task of finding effective form of political struggle was still unfulfilled and the country was still without an effective nationalist organization. Tilak and others still saw social and economic development as bounded by capitalist enterprise.

### Check Your Progress

Q 5. Write a note on Bal Gangadhar Tilak as the leader of the Extremists.

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### 11.7 SUMMARY:

After the foundation of the All India National Congress the British Government began to appose to the programmes and policies the same Congress. The Congress worked in different phases as the Moderates the Extremists and the Gandhi Age. The Moderates were dominated by G.K.Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji and many others, who had petitioning memorials, public meetings and extensive writings in news papers, as its programmes, policies and tactics. One of the groups headed by B.G.Tilak known as Extremist, came up due to interval and external factors, which followed Swadeshi and Boycott movements and wanted to expel the British out of India. It wanted independence first then reforms whereas the Moderates wanted reforms first with the help of the British.

### 11.8 QUESTIONS:

1. Give an account of the programmes and policies of the Moderates.
2. Assess the contribution of G.K.Gokhale towards the Moderates.
3. Account for the rise of the Extremist phase of Indian Congress.
4. Examine the programmes and policies of the Extremist Congress.

### 11.9 ADDITIONAL READING:

1. S.R. Mehrotra, The Emergence of the Indian National congress.
2. B. R. Nanda(ed), Gokhale: The Indian Moderates and British Raj.
3. The British Raj Essays in Modern Indian History.
4. P. Sitaramaiyya, Indian National Congress, Vol I & II.





**MODULE - III****12****GROWTH OF NATIONALISM****A1) Gandhiji and his Movements****(i) Doctrine of Satyagraha and Non Co – operation Movement****UNIT STRUCTURE**

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Doctrine of Satyagraha

12.2.1 Application of the Doctrine of Satyagraha

12.3 Non-Cooperation Movement

12.4 Summary

12.5 Question

12.6 Additional Reading

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**12.0 OBJECTIVES:**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Comprehend the conditions of Indians in South Africa.
- Grasp the basic postulates and steps of Satyagraha.
- Perceive the application of Satyagraha in Africa & India.
- Understand the background of the non-co operation movement.
- Explain the reasons of the withdrawal of the movement.
- Comprehend the effects of the non-co operations movement.

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**12.1 INTRODUCTION:**

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In March 1919, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi made his entry on the stage of India's freedom struggle by giving a call for a nation-wide 'Satyagraha' against the Rowlatt Act. To understand the man who was about to take over the reins of the Indian national

movement and guide its destinies through its most climatic years, it is necessary to trace his career in South Africa where he began the struggle of Indians against racial discrimination since 1893 and developed his unique method of resistance, 'Satyagraha'.

Gandhi's political activities from 1894 to 1906 in South Africa may be classified as the 'Moderate' phase of the struggle of the South African Indians. During this phase, he concentrated on petitioning and sending memorials to the South African legislatures, the Colonial Secretary in London and British Parliament. He believed that if all the facts of the case were presented to the Imperial Government, the British sense of justice and fair play would be aroused and the Imperial Government would intervene on behalf of Indians who were, after all, British subjects. His attempt was to unite the different sections of Indians, and to give their demands wide publicity. This he tried to do through the setting up of the Natal Indian Congress and by starting a paper called 'Indian Opinion' but by 1906, Gandhi having fully tried the 'Moderate' methods of struggle, was becoming convinced that these would not lead anywhere.

The second phase of the struggle in South Africa, which began in 1906, was characterized by the use of the method of passive resistance or civil disobedience, which Gandhi named 'Satyagraha'. It was first used when the government enacted legislation making it compulsory for Indians to take out certificates of registration which held their finger prints.

It was essential to carry these on people at all times. Thus, the Doctrine of Satyagraha was the outcome of Gandhi's struggle against the injustice meted out to the Indians in South Africa.

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## **12.2 DOCTRINE OF SATYAGRAHA:**

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'Satyagraha' is a term coined by Gandhi out of two Sanskrit words, 'Satya' and 'agraha'. 'Sat' means being, or that which exists. 'Satya' implies that which is in accordance with 'sat' that is truth. 'Agraaha' connotes 'holding fast, adherence, insistence, 'firmness or determination'. Thus the compound word 'Satyagraha' demonstrates, 'clinging to truth, holding fast to truth, and insistence on truth'. Satyagraha means literally clinging to truth and as truth for Gandhi was God, Satyagraha in the general sense of the word means the way of life of one who holds steadfastly to God and dedicates his life to Him. The true satyagrahi is accordingly, a man of God. In a narrower sense Satyagraha stands for resisting evil through soul-force or non-violence.

Gandhi claims that Satyagraha is not difficult term to understand. According to him it only means adherence to truth.

Satyagraha is soul-force. The energy of the soul flows through, truth, and therefore, Gandhi calls the South African struggle as Satyagraha. In Gandhi's own words, 'Satyagraha literally means insistence on truth. This power of force is connoted by the word Satyagraha'. Gandhi further explains, 'Its root meaning is holding on to truth, hence truth-force. I have called it love- force or soul-force'. Further he says, 'In the application of Satyagraha I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent, but on one's own self'.

The word Satyagraha does not seem to have been used by anyone else but Gandhi. Gandhi wanted a new name, a Gujarati equivalent for his resistance movement in South Africa. Maganlal Gandhi suggested the word 'Sadagraha'. It means firmness in a good cause. Gandhi changed it to 'Satyagraha', which according to him was an improvement on the word 'sadagraha'.

Satyagraha has been defined as 'action based on truth, love and non-violence'. It is as well a way of life and a method of action. It is a moral equivalence of war and brute force. Miller describes Satyagraha as the power which comes through a tenacious devotion to the ultimate reality. It boosts the inward strength of the soul. It is not merely negative virtue of abstaining from violence but the positive one of doing well. Like charity it begins at home and extends to every other circle and has a universal application.

Vinoba Bhawe spells out the true character of Satyagraha, 'In this word, 'Satyagraha', aversion to what is bad or untrue and interest in what is good, is plainly shown. But in the effort to reject the bad and retain the good we should not forget to contemplate the cosmic aspect of God. We must not forget for an instant that the person who stands in front of you is an aspect of you yourself. You must set about correcting others as gently, with as much sympathy, as you pluck a thorn out of your own hand'.

Gandhi was confident that everything worthy can be achieved by the use of Satyagraha. Satyagraha, an unmistakable mute prayer of an organized soul is self-suffering and does not inflict sufferings on others. It is a fundamental principle of Satyagraha that the tyrant whom the satyagrahi seeks to resist has power over his body and material possessions but can have no power over his soul. The soul can remain unconquered and unconquerable even when the body is imprisoned. The whole doctrine of Satyagraha was born from knowledge of this fundamental truth. Satyagraha is non-cooperation with the evil and the evil system. It is doing well in reply to the evil and the evil system. The satyagrahi would refuse to submit to whatever he considered to be wrong. He would remain peaceful under all provocations. He would resist evil but would not

hate the evil doer. He would vindicate truth not by inflicting sufferings on the opponent but by accepting suffering himself. He hoped thereby to arouse the conscience of the wrong doer. To be successful the satyagrahi must utterly give up fear, hatred and falsehood. He differed from the passive resister, for he gave up violence not from expediency but as a matter of principle. Gandhi said that passive resistance was a weapon of the weak while Satyagraha was the weapon of the strong. The device of Satyagraha was based on universal humanitarian principles of love, righteousness, harmlessness and human dignity. ‘

A Satyagraha campaign when once started has not time limit. It continues until the object is achieved even the struggle itself is a victory. There is no defeat, no despair, no disillusionment in Satyagraha, which is a matchless and priceless weapon. It knows no anger, no malice, and no revenge. The strength of Satyagraha comes from truth. Its strength flows from truthfulness. The doctrine of Satyagraha is capable of infinite extension from the family to the nation and even to the international community. Satyagraha says Gandhi ‘is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self-suffering’. A potent force once set in motion, it becomes a dominant factor in the community and no government can ignore it.

Explaining Satyagraha, Gandhi says that ‘it is like a banyan tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch, Satya (truth) and Ahimsa (non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out’. Besides, Satyagraha consists at times in civil disobedience and at other times in civil obedience. The basis of Satyagraha is truth and its technique is truth in action.

Satyagraha is the infallible and sovereign remedy to all the evils social, economic and political. Satyagraha like air is all pervading, and infectious. It is the nectar of all virtues known to history. But its ingredients when analyzed lie mostly, scattered in Hindu ethics and Hindu scriptures. It is purged of the venom of violence.

According to Gandhi, there are three basic postulates of Satyagraha. (1) The original demand should not be enhanced, (2) a thing achieved by Satyagraha can be retained by Satyagraha, and (3) Satyagraha knows no defeat. ‘In any non-violent campaign’, states Martin Luther King, ‘there are four basic steps - (1) Collection of facts to determine whether injustices are alive, (2) Negotiation, (3) Self-purification, and (4) direct action’

Gandhi lays down three indispensable conditions for the success of Satyagraha (1) the satyagrahi should not have any hatred in his heart against the opponent. (2) The issue must be true and substantial. (3) The satyagrahi must be prepared to suffer till the end of his cause. Truth being the basis of Satyagraha, it does not discriminate between kinsmen and strangers, friends and foes. Resistance, civil or otherwise, is ruled out if human relations are regulated by the 'eternal law of Satya and Ahimsa. B. Kumarappa says, 'primarily it (Satyagraha) is' a case of appealing to the reason and conscience of the opponent by inviting suffering on oneself. The motive is to convert the opponent and make him one's willing ally and friend'

Satyagraha is the greatest spiritual experiment known to history. It is a movement towards simplicity and increasing emphasis on spiritual against material values. It is a method of non-violent direct action, a complete and comprehensive programme and an attitude towards life. It lifts and rises the man to the highest ethical plane. Above the ethical plane lie the religious and philosophical planes. Satyagraha is the most effective, potent and efficacious weapon discovered by man to fight evil, and to check oppression and exploitation in any shape or form.

Women, according to Gandhi are the very personification of non- violence, therefore, are better fitted for the practice of Satyagraha. Satyagraha is not a campaign of harassment or persecution. It is based upon human respect and dignity, of both the satyagrahi and his adversary. It is a process of persuasion and conversion. There is no defeat or victory for any party. Both emerge victorious. There is no humiliation no sense of frustration the technique of Satyagraha has a charm and dignity of its own. Picketing, fasting, at the doors, 'refusal of normal services' is not true of Satyagraha.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.1 What do you understand by the Doctrine of Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi?

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#### **12.2.1 Application of the Doctrine of Satyagraha**

South Africa provided Gandhi with an opportunity for evolving his own style of politics and leadership for trying out new techniques of struggle, on a limited scale. In South Africa, he had already taken the movement from its 'moderate' phase into its

'Gandhian phase'. He already knew the strengths and the weaknesses of the Gandhian method and he was convinced that it was the best method around. It now remained for him to introduce it into India. Gandhi returned to India in January 1915, and was warmly welcomed. His work in South Africa was well known, not only to educated Indians, but as he discovered on his visit to the Kumbh Mela at Haridwar, even to the masses who flocked to him for his 'darshan'. Gokhale had already hailed him as being 'without doubt made of the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made'.

On Gokhale's advice, and in keeping with his own style of never intervening in a situation without first studying it with great care, Gandhi decided that for the first year he would not take a public stand on any political issue. He spent the year travelling around the country, seeing things for himself and in organizing his ashram in Ahmedabad where he and his devoted band of followers who had come with him from South Africa, would lead a community life. Even in the next year Gandhi kept himself aloof from political affairs, including the Home Rule Movement that was gathering momentum at this time.

However, Gandhi did not remain politically idle. During the course of 1917 and early 1918, he was involved in three significant struggles in Champaran in Bihar, in Ahmedabad and in Kheda in Gujarat. The common feature of these struggles was that they related to specific local issues and that they were for the economic demands of the masses. Two of these struggles, Champaran and Kheda, involved peasants and the one 'in Ahmedabad involved industrial workers. In all three of these struggles Gandhi employed the method of Satyagraha to get the grievances of the affected people redressed.

While other politicians were debating the political reforms, Gandhi responded to the call of the peasants of Champaran in Bihar. Since the early nineteenth century the European planters had involved the cultivators in agreements that forced them to cultivate indigo on 3/20<sup>th</sup> of their holdings, known as the 'tinkathia' system, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. German synthetic dyes forced indigo out of the market and the European planters of Champaran, keen to release the cultivators from the obligation of cultivating indigo increased the rent and other illegal dues as a price for the release. There was resistance from the farmers, but the exactions of the planters continued. Raj Kumar Shukla, a local man persuaded Gandhi to come to Champaran to investigate the problem.

On reaching Champaran, Gandhi was ordered by the Commissioner to immediately leave the district. But to the surprise

of all concerned, Gandhi refused and preferred to take the punishment for his defiance of the law. Thus, Gandhi used Satyagraha to defy an illegal order. The Government of India, not willing to make an issue of it and not yet used to treat Gandhi as a rebel, ordered the local government to retreat and allow Gandhi to proceed with his inquiry. Gandhi was joined by young nationalists such as Brij Kishore, Rajendra Prasad, Mahadev Desai, Narhari Parikh and J.B. Kripalani. Along with them Gandhi toured the villages and from dawn to dusk recorded the statements of peasants. Meanwhile the Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry to go into the whole issue, and nominated Gandhi as one of its members. Gandhi convinced the commission that the 'tinkathia' system needed to be abolished and that the peasants should be compensated for the illegal enhancement of their dues. As a compromise with the planters, he agreed that they refund only twenty-five percent of the money they had taken illegally from the peasants.

Gandhi then turned his attention to the problem of textile workers of Ahmedabad. A dispute was brewing between them and the mill owners over the question of a 'plague bonus'. The employers wanted to withdraw the 'plague bonus' once the epidemic had passed. But the workers insisted its continuance, since the enhancement hardly compensated for the rise in the cost of living during the war. Gandhi persuaded the mill owners and the workers to agree to arbitration by a tribunal. But the mill owners, taking advantage of a stray strike, withdrew from the agreement. They offered a twenty percent bonus and threatened to dismiss those who did not accept it.

The breach of agreement was treated by Gandhi as a very serious affair, and he advised the workers to go on strike -and demanded a thirty-five percent increase in wages. The strike began and Gandhi addressed the workers every day on the banks of the Sabarmati River. As the strike continued, after some days, the workers began to exhibit signs of weariness. The attendance at the daily meetings began to decline. Under these circumstances Gandhi decided to go on a fast to rally the workers and strengthen their resolve to continue. The fast, however, also had the effect of putting pressure on the mill owners and they agreed to submit the whole issue to a tribunal. The strike was withdrawn and the tribunal later awarded the thirty-five percent increase to the workers.

Meanwhile Gandhi learnt that the peasants of Kheda district were in extreme distress due to a failure of crops, and that their appeals for the remission of land revenue were being ignored by the government. The 'Gujarat Sabha', of which Gandhi was the President, played a leading role in the agitation. Appeals and petitions having failed, Gandhi advised the withholding of revenue,

and asked the peasants to 'fight upto death against such a spirit of vindictiveness and tyranny' and show that 'it is impossible to govern men without their consent'. Vallabhbhai Patel, a young lawyer and a native of Kheda district, and other young men including Indulal Yagnik, joined Gandhi in touring the villages and urging the peasants to stand firm in the face of increasing government repression. The government was ultimately forced to yield and issued secret instructions to the officials that revenue should be recovered from those peasants who could pay.

These first experiments in Satyagraha brought Gandhi into close touch with the masses, both peasants in the rural areas and the workers in the urban areas. They also helped him find his feet among people of India and study their problems at close quarters. He came to understand to strength and weaknesses of the masses, as well as of the viability of his own political style, Satyagraha.

By his 'experiment with truth', Gandhi became convinced that Satyagraha was the most effective weapon to fight against British injustice and misrule. Encouraged by his success at Champaran, Ahmedabad and Kheda, in February 1919, Gandhi gave a call for a nation-wide protest against the unpopular legislation that the British were threatening to introduce. Two bills, popularly known as Rowlatt Bills aimed at severely curtailing the civil liberties of Indians in the name of curbing terrorist violence, were introduced in the Legislative Council.

The constitutional protest had no effect on the government. Ignoring popular sentiments the government passed the Rowlatt Acts on 21 March 1919. Gandhi decided to oppose the Rowlatt Act by launching a Satyagraha. A Satyagraha Sabha was formed. The form of protest finally decided upon was the observance of nationwide 'hartal' (strike) accompanied by fasting and prayer. In addition it was decided that civil disobedience would be offered against specific laws. The sixth of April was fixed as the date on which the Satyagraha would be launched.

The movement that emerged was very different from the one that had been anticipated or planned. Delhi observed the 'hartal' on 30 March 1919 due to some confusion about dates, and there was considerable violence in the streets. In other parts of the country also protest was generally accompanied by violence and disorder in the Punjab reaction was stronger and in Amritsar and Lahore the situation became very dangerous for the government. Gandhi tried to go to the Punjab to bring the situation under control, but the government deported him to Bombay. He found that Bombay and even his native Gujarat, including Ahmedabad, were up in flames.



Events in the Punjab were moving in a particularly tragic direction. The people of Amritsar reacted strongly against the arrest of two local leaders, Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew on 10 April 1919. The angry mob attacked the town hall and the post office, telegraph wires were cut and Europeans including women were attacked. Army was summoned and the city was handed over to General Dyer, who issued an order prohibiting public meetings and assemblies. Defying the ban, on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919, Baisakhi Day, a large crowd of people gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh to attend public meeting. General Dyer incensed that his orders were disobeyed and wanting to strike terror into whole of the Punjab ordered his troops to fire upon the unarmed crowd. When Dyer withdrew after all his ammunition was exhausted, he left about 1000 dead and several thousand wounded.

The news of the brutality at Jallianwala Bagh spread a current of horror and dismay all over the country. Punjab was placed under martial law and the people of Amritsar forced into indignities such as crawling on their bellies before Europeans. Overwhelmed by the total atmosphere of violence, Gandhi withdraws the Satyagraha movement on 18 April 1919.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.2 Trace the application of the Doctrine of Satyagraha by Mahatma Gandhi in the Indian national movement.

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### **12.3 NON CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT:**

The Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and martial law in the Punjab had belied all the generous war-time promises of the British. The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, announced towards the end of 1919, with dyarchy in the provinces did not satisfy the nationalists. Added to this, the Muslims felt cheated when in May 1920, the terms offered to Turkey through the Treaty of Sevres proved to be humiliating. The Muslims regarded the Caliph of Turkey as their spiritual head and were naturally upset when they found that he would lose control over his empire's holy places. Leading Muslims formed themselves into a Khilafat conference and asked the people to observe 27 October 1919 as Khilafat Day. They called a joint conference of Muslims and Hindus

at Delhi on 23 November on the Khilafat question. During the war Hindus and Muslims had demonstrated complete unity, which grew stronger in the post-war period. Thus, readiness of the Hindus to make common cause with the Muslims was not surprising. The greatest event in Muslim history was that Gandhi was asked to preside over the Khilafat Conference.

Gandhi associated himself with Muslim leaders concern for Turkey during the war and contributed his mite to the campaign made for the release of Muslims, mainly the Ali brothers, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, who had been arrested for their pro-Turkish attitude. He corresponded with the government justifying the demand for the release of the Khilafat prisoners. He saw that the Khilafat question had created an unprecedented awakening among Indian Muslims, an awakening which they were prepared to channel into nationalist directions and into struggle which would eventually develop as a freedom movement. The obvious aim of any practical politician would be to establish Hindu-Muslim unity, which India had not known since the Revolt of 1857.

Gandhi told the first Khilafat Conference, a joint audience of Muslims and Hindus. 'The Mussalmans have adopted a very important resolution. If peace terms are unfavourable to them, which may God forbid they will stop all co-operations with government. It is an inalienable right of the people thus to withhold co-operation. We are not bound to retain government titles and honours or to continue in government service. If government should betray us in a great cause like the Khilafat we could not do otherwise than non-co-operate'. The stage was set for what Gandhi called the non co-operation movement. On 10 March 1920 Gandhi announced his non co-operation programme. Gandhi suggested to the Khilafat Committee that it should adopt a programme of non-violent non co-operation to protest the government's behaviour. On 9 June 1920, the Khilafat Committee at Allahabad unanimously accepted the suggestion of non co-operation and asked Gandhi to lead the movement.

Meanwhile, the Congress which was becoming skeptical of any possibility of political advance through constitutional means and was disgusted with the Hunter Committee Report on brutalities on Punjab, agreed to consider non co-operation. The All India Congress Committee (AICC) met in May 1920 and decided to convene a special session in September 1920 to enable the Congress to decide on its course of action.

On the advice of Gandhi, the Central Khilafat Committee launched the non co-operation movement on 1 August 1920, after the expiry of the notice that Gandhi had given to the Viceroy in his letter of 22 June 1920. Lokmanya Tilak passed away in the early

hours of 1 August 1920 and the day of mourning and of launching of the non co-operation movement merged as people all over the country observed 'hartal' and took processions. Many observed fast and offered prayers.

The special session of the Congress was held in Calcutta on 4 September 1920 and accepted non co-operation as its own. At the annual session of the Congress at Nagpur (December, 1920), C. R. Das moved the main resolution on non co-operation. The programme of non co-operation included the surrender of titles and honours, boycott of government sponsored schools and colleges, law courts, foreign cloth, resignation from government service, refusal to attend government levees, durbars and other official and semi-official functions held by government officials or in their honour non participation in election to the reformed councils either as candidates or as voters. National schools and colleges were to be set up. Panchayats were to be established for settling disputes, hand spinning and weaving was to be encouraged and people were asked to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity, give up untouchability and observe strict non-violence.

The launching of the non co-operation movement, though initiated earlier by the Khilafat Committee, under the leadership of Gandhi galvanized the nation. Gandhi along with the Ali brothers undertook a nation-wide tour during which he addressed hundreds of meetings and met large number of political workers. Boycott of educational institutions was successful. Thousands of students left schools and colleges and joined more than 800 national school and colleges that had been established in different parts of the country. The Swadeshi spirit was revived with new vigour. Picketing helped in reducing the sale of liquor and foreign goods. Boycott of reformed councils led to the election of non-Congress candidates. The boycott of law courts by lawyers was not as successful as the educational boycott. However, many leading lawyers of the country such as C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru, M. R. Jayakar, Saifuddin Kitchlew, Vallabhbhai Patel, C. Rajagopalachari, Asaf Ali and many other gave up lucrative practices. As regards the resignation of government jobs the response was insignificant and negligible. The number of persons who renounced honours and titles was very small compared to the total number of recipients.

In July 1921 the AICC passed a resolution to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales to India to formally inaugurate the reformed legislatures under the Government of India Act 1919. The day the Prince landed in Bombay (17 November 1921) was observed as a day of 'hartal' all over the country. Gandhi himself addressed a huge meeting in the compound of the Elphinstone Mill and lighted a huge bonfire of foreign cloth. However, clashes occurred between those who had gone to attend the welcome function and the crowd

returning from Gandhi's meeting. This was followed by riots in which Parsis, Christians, Anglo-Indians became special targets of attacks. The police resorted to lathi charge and finally firing. According to official reports 53 persons were killed and about 400 were wounded.

Gandhi was deeply hurt at the incidents in Bombay. He strongly denounced the rioters and vowed to abstain from food till the violence stopped. He remarked, 'With non-violence on our lips we have terrorized those who happened to differ from us. The Swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils'. As a result of this ugly incident Gandhi suspended the civil disobedience movement which was to be launched at Bardoli on 23 November 1921. Generally speaking the 'hartal' was successfully observed all over India on 17 November and passed off peacefully except in Bombay.

The Viceroy, Lord Reading was filled with rage over the treatment the Congress meted out to the Prince of Wales on his arrival in India. The government issued a notification declaring the Congress and the Khilafat organization as unlawful. A week later proclamations were issued prohibiting all public assemblies and processions for three months. Thousands of volunteers in U.P., Bombay, Bengal and the Punjab were arrested and imprisoned. Even the leaders were not spared. By the end of 1921, C.R. Das, his wife and son, Lala Lajpat Rai, Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad were detained.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya sought to bring about a rapprochement between the government and the Congress in mid-December 1921. But the government offered such conditions that it meant sacrificing the Khilafat leaders, a condition that Gandhi would not accept. Moreover, the Home Government had already decided against any settlement and advised the Viceroy to withdraw from the negotiations. Repression continued, public meetings and assemblies were banned, newspapers gagged and midnight raids on Congress and Khilafat offices became common.

Shortly after the failure of the above negotiations the annual session of the Congress was held at Ahmedabad with reduced attendance as many of the Congress volunteers were behind the bars. The main resolution adopted by the Congress urged the continuance of the non co-operation movement with greater vigour and advised all Congress workers to organize not only individual civil disobedience but also mass civil disobedience as soon as the masses were sufficiently trained in the method of non-violence.

The government showed no sign of relenting and had ignored both the appeal of the All-Parties Conference held in mid-January

1922 as well as Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy announcing that, unless the government lifted the ban on civil liberties and released political prisoners, he would be forced to go ahead with mass civil disobedience. As the Viceroy was non-responsive, Gandhi had no choice but to announce that mass civil disobedience would begin in Bardoli taluka of Surat district.

Gandhi proceeded to Bardoli to lead the civil disobedience movement in person. The entire country watched the great battle in a spirit of animated suspense. However, the battle was lost even before it had begun. At the crucial moment Gandhi called off the civil disobedience movement at Bardoli. What made him to take this decision was a gruesome tragedy which took place on 5 February 1922 at Chauri Chaura, a village near Gorakhpur in U.P. Here a Congress and Khilafat procession irritated by the police behaviour attacked them. The police opened fire. When the mob became furious the police hid inside the police station-which was set on fire by the irate mob. Policemen who tried to escape were hacked to death and thrown into the fire. Altogether twenty-two policemen were done to death. This incident created a feeling of disgust and shocked Gandhi. This event was out of tune with his principles and programme and he abandoned the no-rent campaign which was to begin at Bardoli. He also persuaded the Congress Working Committee to ratify his decision and thus, on 12 February 1922 the Non Co-operation Movement came to an end.

Gandhi's decision to withdraw the civil disobedience movement in response to the violence at Chauri Chaura bewildered a number of nationalist leaders who were still in prison. C.R. Das, Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, Lala Lajpat Rai and others could not understand why the entire country had to pay the price for the crazy behaviour of some people in a remote village. Leaders like Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai sent angry letters to Gandhi from jail giving an impression that if they were free, they would have resisted the move for abandoning the mass movement. They argued that Chauri Chaura while unfortunate, should not have been allowed to interfere with the programme of the civil disobedience movement. Many in the country thought that the Mahatma had failed miserably as a leader.

The government correctly gauged the situation and found the time opportune to arrest Gandhi on 13 March 1922. Following the trial he was sentenced to six years simple imprisonment. Thus, ended the first phase of the Non Co-operation Movement. The movement could not make much headway and later on he realized that it was 'Himalayan Blunder' on his part to have launched the movement without adequate groundwork and proper training of the masses. However, it is important to note that the movement was not quite fruitless. The non co-operation movement had in fact

succeeded on many counts. It certainly demonstrated that it commanded the support and sympathy of vast sections at the Indian people. Many sections of Indian peasants, workers, artisans, shop-keepers, traders, professionals, white collar employees came within the orbit of national movement under the leadership of the Congress and Gandhi. For the first time that the nationalists from the towns, students from school, and colleges or even the educated and politically aware in the villages had made a serious attempt to bring the ideology and the movement into their midst. The tremendous participation of Muslims in the movement, and the maintenance of communal unity was in itself a great achievement. Through the non co-operation movement the Indian national movement entered the phase of the mass movement under the leadership of Gandhi.

### Check Your Progress

Q.4 What were the causes of the Non-Cooperation Movement?  
What were its consequences?

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### 12.4 SUMMARY:

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Satyagraha means adherence to truth or insistence on truth, which Gandhiji applied in South Africa and India to solve the problem of Indians in South Africa. He says that it is the greatest spiritual experiment known to history. It is a movement towards simplicity and increasing emphasis on spiritual against material values. This is a method of non-violent direct action, a complete and comprehensive programme and an attitude towards life. It takes the man to the highest ethical plane. With the help of this Satyagraha, Gandhiji started non-cooperation movement against the British for which several causes were responsible. This movement was based on non-violence but the incident at Chauri Chaura, the movement took violence turn due to the British. Gandhiji was constrained to withdraw the movement in 1922.

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**12.5 QUESTIONS:-**

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1. Examine the Doctrine of Satyagraha. How was it practiced in South Africa?
2. Give an account of the application of the Doctrine of Satyagraha in and out side of India.
3. What were the causes and consequences of the non-co operations movement of 1920-22?
4. Analyse the non-co operations movement. Bring out its importance in the Indian National Movement.

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**12.6 ADDITIONAL READINGS:-**

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1. Sumit Sarkar, Modern India.
2. Judith M. Brown, Gandhis Rise to Power, Indian Politics 1915-1922.
3. Judith M. Brown, Gandhi and Civil Disobedience. The Mahatma in Indian Politics 1928-34.
4. Tara chand, History of the Freedom in India, Vols. I-IV.



## **GROWTH OF NATIONALISM**

### **A2) Gandhiji and his Movements**

#### **(i) Civil Disobedience Movement**

#### **(ii) Quit India Movement**

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Civil Disobedience Movement
- 13.3 Quit India Movement
- 13.4 Summery
- 13.5 Questions
- 13.6 Additional Readings

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#### **13.0 OBJECTIVE:**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Perceive the background of the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- Understand the Congress ultimatum and Viceroy Irwin's Declaration.
- Know the Gandhi-Irhain Meeting and the Congress Session at Lahor of 1929.
- Explain the Launch of the Movement and the Dandhi March.
- Perceive the programme of the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- Comprehend the circumstances that led to the Quit India Movement.
- Explain the nature and significance of the Quit India Movement.



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### 13.1 INTRODUCTION:

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Following the end of the Non Co-operation Movement in 1922, political activities became comparatively dormant. However, the flames of nationalism were kept alive by the dedicated Gandhian workers who spread the message of nationalism in villages. The Swarajists led by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das disrupted the working of the government at the central and provincial level by resorting to a policy of 'uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction with a view of making Government through the Assembly and Councils impossible'. Meanwhile Gandhi was released from the Poona Jail on 5 February 1924 on ground of ill-health. In 1926, Lord Irwin succeeded Lord Reading as the Viceroy.

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### 13.2 THE DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT:

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The national movement once again gained momentum from the latter part of 1927. The British Government announced on 8 November 1927, appointment of a Statutory Commission under the chairmanship, of sir John Simon to review the working of the Government of India Act, 1919 and to recommend whether India was ready for further constitutional reforms. The Simon Commission did not include any Indian member and almost all Indian political parties decided to boycott this 'all-white commission'. The call for a boycott of the Commission was endorsed by the Liberal Federation led by Tej Bahadur Sapru, by the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress, and by the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. The Indian National Congress decided to turn the boycott into a popular movement.

When the members of the Simon Commission landed at Bombay on 3 February 1928, all major cities and towns observed a complete 'hartal', and people participated in mass rallies, processions and black-flag demonstrations with popular slogan 'Go Back Simon'. It was during one of such demonstrations in Lahore, the most revered leader of Punjab, Lala Lajpat Rai was hit on the chest by lathis on 30 October and succumbed to the injuries on 17 November 1928. It was his death that Bhagat Singh and his comrades were seeking to avenge when they killed the white police official, Saunders, in December 1928.

Lord Birkenhead, the Conservative Secretary of State who was responsible for the appointment of the Simon Commission, had constantly harped on the inability of Indian to formulate a concrete scheme of constitutional reforms which had the support of wide sections of Indian political opinion. This challenge was taken up and a meeting of the All-Parties Conference was held in February, May and August 1928 to finalize a scheme which came to be

knows as the Nehru Report, after Motilal Nehru, its chief author. The Nehru Report declared that the aim of Indian political Endeavour should be the attainment of Dominion Status. It rejected the principle of separate communal electorates on which previous constitutional reforms had been based. The Report also recommended universal adult suffrage, equal rights for women, freedom to form unions, and dissociation of the state from religion in any form. However, the Nehru Report did not satisfy the communal parties such as the Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League. Even young and radical nationalists led by Jawaharlal Nehru had their own objections. They were dissatisfied with its declaration of Dominion Status on the lines of the self governing dominions as the basis of the future constitution of India. They demanded 'Complete Independence'.

The Calcutta session of the Congress in December 1928 became an arena for the political battle between the advocates of Dominion Status and the protagonists of 'Complete Independence'. Gandhi attended the Congress session and brought all his influence to bear on the delegates to vote for a compromise resolution which asked the Congress to accept Dominion Status if it was granted within a year and failing that to launch a non-violent, non co-operation movement. Subhas Chandra Bose proposed an amendment to the resolution moved by Gandhi in order to ensue that the aim of the Congress shall be the attainment of Complete Independence. The fact that Bose moved this amendment brought to the forefront the fundamental cleavage between the old school and the new. However, the resolution proposed by Gandhi was adopted by majority of the Congressmen.

Meanwhile, in May, 1929, a Labour Government headed by Ramsay Mac Donald took power in England and Lord Irwin, the Viceroy was called to London for consultations. On his return to India the Viceroy issued a proclamation on 31 October 1929 on behalf of His Majesty's Government. He stated that it was implied in the previous declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of Indian constitutional advance was Dominion Status. He also promised a Round Table Conference as soon as the Simon Commission submitted its report.

Within twenty-four hours of the Viceroy's announcement a conference of major national leaders met at Delhi and issued what came to be known as the Delhi Manifesto, in which they demanded that it should be made clear that the purpose of the Round Table Conference was not to discuss when Dominion Status should be granted, but to formulate a scheme for its implementation. Lord Irwin himself told Gandhi on 23 December 1929 that he was in no position to give the assurance they demanded. Thus, the stage of negotiations was over and the stage of confrontation was not to

begin. Gandhi realized that the Labour Government was not strong enough to carry out its policy in regard to India, unless England could be convinced that there was no alternative for her but 'to concede the Indian demand. Moreover, he saw that the country was drifting to violent revolution, and that the only way to stave off violence was to start civil disobedience movement.

Against the background of this atmosphere, full of promise for the next movement, the 1929 annual session of the Congress assembled at Lahore in December under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru, who brought youthful vigour to the Congress said in his presidential address - 'The British Empire today dominates over millions of people and holds large areas of world's surface despite the will of their inhabitants. It cannot be a true commonwealth so long imperialism is its basis and the exploitation of other races its chief means of sustenance...' Then he declared, 'We stand for the fullest freedom of India'. Nehru's new approach was reflected in the Congress declaring Complete Independence as its objective and repudiating the Nehru Report which was based on Dominion Status. On the banks of river Ravi, at midnight on 31 December 1929, Jawaharlal Nehru as the president of the Congress unfurled the tricolour flag of Indian independence. Independence Day meetings were organized throughout India on 26 January 1930 at which a pledge to attain 'Poorna Swaraj' or Complete Independence was taken.

The Lahore Congress of 1929 had authorized the Working Committee to launch a programme of civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes. The Working Committee of the Congress met again at Sabarmati on 14-15 February and authorized Gandhi to start a non-violent civil disobedience movement for attaining complete independence. Its resolution on civil disobedience read - 'In the opinion of the Working Committee, Civil Disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence for the purpose of achieving 'Poorna Swaraj', as an article of faith and... welcomes the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi and authorized him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith to start Civil Disobedience. The Working Committee further hopes that, in the event of a mass movement taking place, all those who are rendering voluntary co-operation to the government, such as lawyer, and those who are receiving so-called benefits from it, such as students, will withdraw their co-operation or renounce benefits as the case may be and throw themselves into the final struggle for freedom'. The Working Committee, thus authorized Gandhi and his followers in faith to start the Civil Disobedience Movement.

When the All India Congress Committee met at Ahmedabad on 21 March 1930, after Gandhi had begun his Dandi March, not

only endorsed the resolution of the Working Committee, but somewhat widened its scope. The AICC expressed the hope that the whole country will respond to the action taken by Gandhi and authorized the provincial Congress committees to organize and undertake such Civil Disobedience as to them may seem proper and in the manner that may appear to them most suitable.

Gandhi now applied himself to the preliminaries of the movement. As was his way, his first preliminary was to put the Government in the wrong. He published an article in 'Young India' in which he offered the following terms to the Viceroy and made a promise that if they were acceptable to the Government he would not start civil disobedience. The demands included removal of excise duties, total prohibition, and reduction of the Rupee ratio to 1s. 4d., reduction of land revenue by at least fifty per-cent, abolition of salt tax, reduction of military expenditure by fifty per-cent, reduction of salaries of the higher graded services, protective tariff on foreign cloth, abolition of the salt tax, release of political prisoners except those charged with murder.

Acceptance of these demands would have amounted to the achievement of most of the objectives for which Indians had been agitating. It would have greatly transformed the nature of the Indian administration. Their non-acceptance revealed the exploitative character of the British rule. As expected the Viceroy made no response, on the contrary, the government began repressive measures and a number of prominent congressmen were arrested. The most prominent among those arrested in the first round was Subhas Chandra Bose, who was regarded dangerous by the Government of Bengal. Gandhi, now had no alternative but to think seriously in terms of launching the long awaited Civil Disobedience Movement.

Gandhi began to give thought to the content of the movement. Another month passed while Gandhi waited for inspiration before announcing the proper course of action. By the end of February, the formula began to emerge as Gandhi began to talk about salt. Although he had already given some hint of Salt Satyagraha while talking to a number of friends at Sabarmati who had gathered there for the Working Committee meeting, he had not given the actual idea of the campaign with which he wanted to initiate civil disobedience movement. After a lot of pondering, Gandhi announced that he proposed to open his campaign of civil disobedience by opposing the Salt Act. It was towards the end of February 1930 Gandhi crystallized his idea of the Salt Satyagraha. Soon salt became a mysterious word, a word of power. The Salt Tax was to be attacked and the Salt Law was to be broken. Gandhi said that he would disobey the salt law, for it was the most

iniquitous of all laws in India, a burden on millions which taxed even poorest peasants.

To understand why Gandhi chose the Salt Tax for the civil disobedience movement, it is important to know the origin of the Salt Tax. In 1836, the British Government had appointed a Salt Commission. It recommended that the Indian salt should be taxed and through this made costlier in order to enable salt from England to be sold in India. British exports to India being less, manufacturers required fewer ships than were required for taking Indian raw materials and food products back to England. Thus, additional ships had to be sent along with those carrying British manufactured goods to India. But these ships could not come empty. Hence the British decided to take advantage by loading these ships with Cheshire salt to be sold in India. If the British salt had to be sold at a profitable price, Indian salt had to be made more costly. For this purpose Indian salt was taxed. The Salt Tax constituted the most inhuman poll tax ingenuity of man could devise. It is for this reason Gandhi selected Salt Tax for civil disobedience movement. He decided to launch the salt Satyagraha campaign by manufacturing salt at Dandi, a village on the sea-coast of Gujarat about 200 miles to the south of Sabarmati.

In accordance with the Satyagrahi's firm conviction that all action must be 'in the public view', Gandhi informed the 'Viceroy in a letter addressed to him on 2 March 1930, which he sent through a messenger named Reginald Reynolds, a young Englishman who was living in the Ashram at that time. In this letter Gandhi explained at great length why he was resorting to the extreme step of launching the civil disobedience movement. To Gandhi's letter, the Viceroy sent a brief reply regretting that the Mahatma intended to contravene the law.

Gandhi, true to his announced programme, decided to inaugurate the campaign by leading a small band of dedicated followers from Sabarmati to Dandi. The plan was brilliantly conceived though few realized its significance when it was first announced. Gandhi, along with seventy-eight members of the Sabarmati Ashram began the epic journey to Dandi on 12 March 1930. When the march started the government was skeptical about the effect that it would produce. Hence, the authorities took no notice of it. The Anglo-Indian papers began to write taunting articles and the 'Statesman' of Calcutta in a leading article wrote that 'the Mahatma could go on boiling sea water till Dominion Status was attained'. A section of the Congressmen also shared this skepticism.

Even before the march began, thousands began to throng the Sabarmati Ashram in anticipation of the dramatic events that lay

ahead. Gandhi painstakingly explained his plans, gave directions for future action, impressed on the people the necessity for non-violence, and prepared them for the Government's response. And as Gandhi began his march at the head of his dedicated followers, the political atmosphere became charged. News of his progress, of his speeches, of the teeming crowds that greeted and followed the marchers, of the long road lovingly strewn with leaves and festooned with banners and flags, of men and women quietly paying their homage by spinning yam on their 'charkas' as Gandhi passed, of the 300 village officials in Gujarat who resigned their posts in answer to his appeal, was carried day after day by news papers to readers across the country and broadcast live by thousands of Congress workers to eager listeners. By the time Gandhi reached Dandi, he had a whole nation, aroused and expectant, waiting restlessly for the final signal.

The journey was so scheduled that the marchers should reach Dandi on 5 April and break the Salt Law on 6 April, the tragic date of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. That day was fixed by Gandhi for law-breaking all over the country. At the appointed time Gandhi and his companions reached the beach of Dandi and picked up salt lying there-under the monopoly law it belonged to the Government. There was no police interference and none was arrested. Immediately after breaking the Salt Law Gandhi issued a press statement saying - 'Now that the technical or synonymous breach of the law has been committed, it is open to any one who will take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that workers should everywhere manufacture salt, and where they know how to prepare clean salt make use of it and instruct the villagers at the same time that they run the risk of being prosecuted.'

The accumulated enthusiasm, which each day of Gandhi's march was filling in the people, burst out on 6 April 1930. The technical breach of the Salt Law by Gandhi was a signal for the countrywide repetition of the same. In Tamil Nadu, C.Rajagopalachari, led a salt march from Trichinopoly to Vedaranniyam on the Tanjore coast. By the time he was arrested on 30 April he had collected enough volunteers to keep the campaign going for quite some time. Throughout the coastal regions right from Gujarat to Kerala on the western coast and Tamil Nadu to Bengal on the eastern coast Salt Law was violated. In Andhra, a number of 'sibirams' (military style camps) were set up in different districts to serve as the head quarters of the salt Satyagraha, and bands of Satyagrahis marched through villages on their way to the coastal centres to defy the law.

Where natural conditions did not permit of the illegal manufacture of salt, violation of other laws was resorted to. J.M. Sen .Gupta, the Mayor of Calcutta, defied the Law of Sedition by openly reading seditious literature in a public meeting. An intensive campaign was started on an extensive scale for the boycott of liquor as well as of foreign clothes and British goods of all sorts with the help of volunteer organizations and of picketers. In defiance of forest laws, people began to cut down timber in Central Provinces and Bombay. A campaign for the non- payment of taxes and land revenue was started in Gujarat, U.P. and Midnapur district in Bengal. Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest on 14 April 1930, for defiance of the salt law, was answered with huge demonstrations and clashes with the police in the cities of Madras, Calcutta and Karachi. In the North-West Frontier Province, Khan Abdul Gafar Khan had been active for several years organizing a band of non-violent revolutionaries, the Khudai Khidmatgars, popularly known as the 'Red Shirts', who played an important role during the civil disobedience movement. On 23 April 1930, the arrest of Congress leaders in the N.W. Frontier Province led to a mass demonstration in Peshawar. The Peshawar demonstrations are significant because it was here that the soldiers of the Gharwall regiments refused to fire on the unarmed crowd.

The Civil Disobedience Movement spread throughout the country and followed typical pattern of processions, public meetings, lathi charges, police firing, arrests, convictions, confiscation of property, new ordinances, hartals, strikes in mills, suppression of news-papers etc. As the movement advanced repression grew. The authorities behaved as if British rule was being uprooted and must be retained even by barbarous methods. The part played by the press in the movement was vital. News-papers were the medium through which Gandhi announced his programme, thorough which the people knew of police atrocities, and through which law-breaking activities and other activities of the movement were reported. The authorities decided to curb the freedom of the press and 27 April 1930 issued an ordinance by which the provisions of the Press Act of 1910 were revived.

Early in the first week of May, Gandhi again gave the Viceroy intimation of his second march, this time the aim was to take possession of the Dharasana Salt Works. In the face of the second challenge to the Government, pressure began to build up from officials, Governors and the military establishment and on 4 May 1930, the Viceroy finally ordered Gandhi's arrest. There was a massive wave of protest at Gandhi's arrest. In Bombay, the crowd that poured into the streets was so large that the police just withdrew. Its ranks were swelled by thousands of textile and railway workers.

In spite of Gandhi's arrest the raid on the Dharasana Salt Works in Surat went ahead. On 21 May 1930, a group of Satyagrahis, 2000 in number led by Sarojini Naidu and Imam Saheb, Gandhi's comrade of the South African struggle and Gandhi's son, Manilal, in the front ranks, marched towards the police cordon that had sealed off the Dharasana salt works. As they came close the police rushed forward and set upon the non-resisting Satyagrahis till they fell down. As injured were carried away the second batch of the Satyagrahis took their place. This followed till the toll was already 320 injured and two dead. A detailed account of the heroic non-violent fight put up by the Satyagrahis at Dharasana has been preserved by Webb Miller, the American journalist who was an eye witness of the grim tragedy. He summed up his impressions in these words- 'In eighteen years of my reporting in twenty countries, during which I have witnessed innumerable civil disturbances, riots, street fights and rebellions, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharasana'. Following the raid on the Dharasana salt works, similar raids were conducted by the Satyagrahis in different parts of the country. At Wadala, a suburb of Bombay, the raids on the salt works culminated on 1 June 1930 in mass action by a crowd of 15,000 who repeatedly broke the police cordon and carried away salt. In Karnataka, 10,000 invaded the Sanikatta salt works and faced lathis and bullets. In other coastal districts as well the salt Satyagraha continued with added vigour.

On 10 April 1930, Gandhi had made a special appeal in his paper 'Young India' to the women of India to take up the work of picketing and spinning. The effect was almost miraculous. Thousands of women responded to the call of Gandhi. Women who had never stepped unescorted out of their homes, women who had stayed in purdha, young mothers and widows, and unmarried girls, became a familiar sight as they stood from morning to night outside liquor shops and opium dens and stores selling foreign cloth, quietly but firmly persuading the customers and shopkeepers to change their ways. The awakening of the women not only added to the number of civil resisters to a considerable extent, but their examples also redoubled the energy and activities of men. Along with the women, students and youth played prominent part in the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor. The liquor boycott brought Government revenues from excise duties crashing down.

The Civil Disobedience Movement also popularized a variety of forms of mobilization. 'Prabhat Pheris', in which groups of men, women and children went around at dawn singing nationalist songs, became the rule in villages and towns. 'Patrikas' or illegal news-sheets, some-times written by hand and some-times cyclostyled were part of the strategy to defy the hated Press Act. Magic Lanterns were used to take the nationalist message to the villages.



Meanwhile, the publication of the report of the Simon Commission, which contained no mention of Dominion Status and was in other ways also a regressive document, combined with repressive policy, further upset even moderate political opinion. In a conciliatory gesture, the Viceroy on 9 July, 1930 suggested a Round Table Conference and reiterated the goal of Dominion Status. He also accepted the suggestion, made by forty members of the Central Legislature that Tej Bahadur Sapru and M.R. Jayakar be allowed to explore the possibilities of peace between the Congress and the Government. Accordingly Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru were taken to Yerwada jail to meet Gandhi and discuss the possibilities of a settlement. But nothing came out of the talks.

In November 1930, when India was engulfed in the Civil Disobedience Movement, the First Round Table Conference was held in London under the presidency of Ramsay Mac Donald, the British Prime Minister to decide the political future of India. The deliberations of this conference were boycotted by the Congress. The Prime Minister expressed the hope that the Congress would participate in the next round of deliberations to be held later in the year. On 25 January 1931, the Viceroy announced the unconditional release of Gandhi and all other members of the Congress Working Committee, so that they might be able to respond to the Prime Minister's statement 'freely and fearlessly'.

After deliberations the Congress Working Committee authorized Gandhi to initiate discussions with the Viceroy. After a fortnight-long discussion the so called 'Gandhi-Irwin Pact' was concluded on 5 March 1931. The terms of the agreement included immediate release of all political prisoners not convicted for violence, the remission of all fines not yet collected, the return of confiscated lands not yet sold to third parties, and lenient treatment for those government employees who had resigned. The Government also permitted the people in the coastal regions to manufacture and consume salt and the right to peaceful non-aggressive picketing was granted. The Congress on its part, agreed to discontinue the Civil Disobedience Movement and that Congress would participate in the next Round Table Conference.

In September 1931, Gandhi attended the Second Round Table conference as the sole representative of the Congress. The question of the representation of the Muslims in the new constitution emerged as one of the major problems at this conference. The Second Round Table Conference, whose sole outcome was the widening of the cleavage between the Congress and the minorities, specially the Muslim League, concluded on 1 December 1931. Being disappointed Gandhi returned to India by the end of the month.

Soon after his return to India, Gandhi asked Lord Willingdon, the new Viceroy for an interview to discuss important issues. The Viceroy, however, declined to meet Gandhi. Following this the Congress decided to revive the Civil Disobedience Movement. On 4 January 1932, the Government launched its pre-emptive strike against the national movement by arresting Gandhi, promulgating ordinances which gave the authorities unlimited power. The Congress organizations were banned and practically all Congress leaders were arrested.

The response of the people all over the country was massive. During the first four months, more than 80,000 Satyagrahis, most of them urban and rural poor were imprisoned. Peaceful picketers, Satyagrahis and processionists were lathi-charged, beaten and often awarded rigorous imprisonment and heavy fines. The no-tax campaigns in different parts of rural India were treated with great severity. Lands, houses cattle, agricultural implements and other property were freely confiscated. The police committed many atrocities. The movement was effectively crushed within a few months. In August 1932, the number of those convicted came down to 3,047 and by August 1933 only 4,500 Satyagrahis were in prison. The Civil Disobedience Movement continued to linger till early April 1934 and finally the AICC officially withdrew the movement in May 1934.

Thus, the great Civil Disobedience Movement came to an ignoble end, in spite of all the brave and heroic deeds of which any nation may well feel proud. Referring to the beginning of the year 1934, the official historian of the Congress wrote- 'The progress of Civil Disobedience was none too satisfactory. The prisoners who were released were fagged and found themselves unable or unwilling to face another conviction.'

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.1 Explain the Circumstances that led to the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930.

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## **13.3 QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT :**

### **13.2.1 Circumstances that led to the Quit India Movement**

The quit India movement was the last in the series of mass movements launched by the Congress under the leadership of

Gandhi. During the early years of the 1920s, the non-cooperation movement had been launched against the British rule. A decade later, Gandhi undertook the historic Dandi March to break the salt laws and as its sequel, the civil disobedience movement of epic proportions started involving the masses of India. During the course of these years Gandhi and the Indian National Congress were able to forge a most powerful anti-imperial united front of the Indian people against the British. During 1930-31, Gandhi had chosen salt as a symbol of war against the British. By doing so, he demonstrated the utter callousness and exploitative nature of British rule in India. After a pause of ten years, Gandhi gave a call for the British to 'Quit India'.

When the second World War broke out in September 1939 and England declared war against Germany, India was also dragged into the war. The Congress demanded a declaration of British war aims and sought for India the status of an independent nation. Receiving no response from the British Government, the Congress ministries in the provinces resigned in protest between October and November 1939. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League who had become a bitter critic of the Congress, was pleased that the Congress ministries had resigned and organized 22 December 1939 as a day of deliverance and thanks giving'.

The British authorities were keen to secure the cooperation of the Indian leaders in their war efforts by dangling the carrot of reforms before them. On 8 August 1940 Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy made a declaration, known as the 'August Declaration'. He made it known that the British Government did not contemplate any immediate transfer of power, but added that after the conclusion of the war a body of representatives of the principal elements in India's national life would be established to devise the framework of new constitution. The Muslim League welcomed the August offer, but it hardly evoked any response from the Congress.

The rejection of the August Declaration widened the gulf between England and nationalist India. The Congress then decided to launch a civil disobedience movement under Gandhi's leadership. Gandhi decided to launch an individual Satyagraha movement and not a mass civil disobedience movement. He chose Vinobha Bhave to lead the individual Satyagraha on 17 October 1940. As soon as an individual was arrested another took his place till the prisoners numbered 600. Later on 17 December 1940, Gandhi suspended this movement, but it was resumed on 5 January 1941 and more than 20,000 Satyagrahis were arrested. The Congress did not launch this movement on a wider scale because the Congress leaders were hesitant to embarrass British war efforts in India.

The military situation of the Allied power in the European and Asian theatre became very grave during 1940-41. The war spread into the Middle Eastern region as well. On 22 June 1941, violating the Non-aggression Pact and neutrality, Germany launched an attack against the Soviet Union and with this the war entered a new phase. The Nazi troops achieved resounding victories in western and eastern Europe. In Asia, the Japanese forces had been sweeping across the South East Asia in the quest of a 'New World Order'. The negotiations that were started by the Japanese diplomats with the United States in Washington, in April 1941, to resolve the conflict between them in a peaceful manner produced no results. Later, on 7 December 1941, all of a sudden, the Japanese bombers struck at the American Naval Base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. This incident led to the declaration of war on Japan by the U.S.A.

Meanwhile political frustration in India was increasing. This frustration was aggravated by the statement that Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister made on 8 September 1941, that the Atlantic Charter, which in enunciating the war aims of the Allied Powers had affirmed the right of the people to choose the form of government under which they would live, did not apply to India. The situation became more critical as the Axis powers mounted their offensive against England and the news of British reverses in the war began to pour in. In the South East Asia, by 1942 Rangoon and Singapore fell into the hands of the advancing Japanese armies. The British Government became apprehensive that an unfriendly India would cause great damage to its war efforts. It was under these circumstances that Churchill was forced to think of conciliatory moves to pacify India, specially the Congress.

As the first gesture to reconcile the differences with the Congress, Churchill ordered the release of many of its leaders including Nehru and Azad. The British Government also tried to utilize the good office of the President of China, Chiang Kai Shek to pacify and win over Indian leaders for active help in the war. Chiang Kai Shek came to India in February 1942 and met several Indian leaders. The U.S. President F.D. Roosevelt also wrote a letter to Churchill counseling settlement of the Indian political problems by offering some move towards self government to India. Taking all these factors into consideration Churchill decided to make an offer of Dominion Status for India after the end of the war and announced the appointment of Cripps Mission.

Sir Stafford Cripps came to India on 22 March 1942 and after negotiating with the leaders of several political parties and few other prominent persons formulated his proposals. The Cripps plan

proposed that India would have Dominion Status and a constitution making body after the end of the war and that. in the meantime, the British Government would, with the cooperation of the Indian people, 'retain control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort'.

The Cripps proposals which had been made at the very last hour and because of the compulsion of the events was rejected by the Congress Working Committee by a resolution passed on 11 April 1942. Gandhi dismissed the proposals outright as 'a post-dated cheque on a falling bank'.

The failure of the Cripps Mission made it clear that England was unwilling to offer an honorable settlement and a real constitutional advance during the war, and that she was determined to continue leaders like Gandhi and Nehru who did not want to do anything to hamper the anti-fascist war effort of the Allies were convinced by the empty gesture of the 'Cripps Offer', that any further silence would be tantamount to accepting the right of the British to decide India's fate without any reference to the wishes of her people. Though Gandhi like Nehru had been very clear that the anti-fascist struggle, especially that of the Russians and Chinese people, by the spring of 1942 he was becoming increasingly convinced of the inevitability of a struggle. A fortnight after Cripps departure, Gandhi drafted a resolution for the Congress Working Committee calling for England's withdrawal and the adoption of non-violent non-cooperation against any Japanese invasion.

Apart from British obduracy, there were other factors that made a struggle both inevitable and necessary. The advance of the Japanese forces compelled the government to take some precautionary measures, which added to the misery of the people. One of them was the scorched earth policy. Thousands were driven out of their homes on the sea coast, particularly in Bengal and Orissa, and deprived of shelter and livelihood. another was forced collection of war contribution. The wartime shortages, rising prices and black-marketing led to the mounting of popular discontent.

The growing feeling of an imminent British collapse encouraged popular willingness to give expression to this discontent. The news of Allied set-backs and British withdrawals from South East Asia and Burma and the trains bringing wounded soldiers from Assam and Burma border confirmed this feeling. Besides, the manner of the British evacuation from Malaya and Burma convinced the people of the selfish nature of the imperialists. It was common knowledge that the British had evacuated the white residents and generally left the subject people to their fate. Letters from Indians in South East Asia to their relatives in India were full of graphic accounts of British betrayal

and their being left at the mercy of the Japanese. The popular faith in the stability of British rule had reached such a low that there was a run on the banks and people withdrew deposits from post-office savings accounts and started hoarding gold, silver and coins. Gandhi was convinced that the time was ripe for struggle. However, the question arose as to whether the launching of a struggle against the British when England was waging a war against Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy would be consistent with the past policy of the Congress. At the instance of Nehru, the Congress had denounced Fascism before the war. After the commencement of the Second World War Nehru felt that the victory of Fascism would be a tragedy for the world. He would have been happy if the Indian people could fight in support of the Allied powers. However, he knew that unless India was free Indians could not fight a war in defence of freedom. Under these circumstances, before the Congress launched the all India movement in 1942 there were considerable doubts and questions among the Congressmen, especially in the minds of Nehru and Azad. They doubted the ethics of launching a civil disobedience movement at that juncture.

By the middle of 1942 Gandhi had definitely decided upon starting a civil disobedience movement against the British. When this question was discussed at the Congress Working Committee in July 1942, Azad, as the President of the Congress opposed Gandhi. Later Azad claimed, 'Among the members of the Working Committee only Jawaharlal supported me, and then only upto a point. The other members would not oppose Gandhi even when they were not fully convinced' On the question whether a civil disobedience movement should be started during the war, the differences between Gandhi and Azad were so great that Gandhi even wrote to Azad asking him to resign. Later Gandhi said that he had written the letter in haste and that he wanted to withdraw it. Gandhi, however, held firm to his idea of starting a civil disobedience movement during the war.

Though Gandhi had been airing his views regarding the impending struggle, it was the Working Committee of the Congress at its meeting at Wardha on 14 July 1942, accepted the idea of the struggle. The Congress Working Committee. passed a long resolution, generally referred to as the 'Quit India' resolution. it renewed the demand that 'the British rule in India must end immediately', and reiterated the view that the freedom of India was 'necessary not only in the interest of India but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, Militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another'.

The Quit India resolution emphasized that the continuance of the British rule in India was good neither for India nor 'for the

success of the United Nations'. It proposed the establishment of a provisional government representing all important sections of the people if India was to 'resist aggression'. This provisional government would evolve a scheme to convene a Constituent Assembly and representatives of free India and of Great Britain 'will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the cooperation of the two countries as allies in the common task of meeting aggression'. The resolution further stated that, in making the proposal for the withdrawal of British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war in any ways to encourage aggression on India or increased pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis Group. The Congress pleaded that its 'very reasonable' and 'just proposal' be accepted by Britain 'not only in the interest of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom to which United Nations proclaimed their adherence. In case the British did not agree to withdraw from India, it was resolved that the Congress would be forced 'to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920, when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy, for the vindication of political rights and liberty', 'a mass struggle on non-violent lines under the inevitable leadership of Gandhi would be started'.

The All India Congress Committee met on August 8 at Gowalia Tank in Bombay to put its seal of approval to the 'Quit India' resolution. This meeting was unprecedented in the popular enthusiasm that it generated. Huge crowds waited outside as the leaders deliberated on the issue. The feeling of anticipation and expectation ran so high that in the open session, when the leaders made their speeches before the many thousands who had collected to hear them, there was pin-drop silence. The resolution was moved by Jawaharlal Nehru and seconded by Vallabhbhai Patel. Only thirteen members opposed it, twelve of them were communists. The communists had changed their attitude towards the war and called it the 'peoples' war after Germany's invasion of Russia.

After the passage of the resolution Gandhi made an inspiring speech. He spoke for 140 minutes, first in Hindustani and then in English. He first made it clear that 'the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks'. In the course of his speech Gandhi added, 'Here is a 'mantra', a short one that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The 'mantra' is - 'Do or Die'. We shall either free India or die in the attempt, we shall not live to see the perpetuation

of our slavery. Every true Congress man or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge.’

The British Government, however, was in no mood to either negotiate with the Congress or wait for the movement to be formally launched. In the early hours of August 9, in a single sweep, all top leaders of the Congress were arrested and taken to unknown destinations and all Congress organization were declared illegal.

The sudden attack by the government produced an instantaneous reaction among the people. As soon as the news of arrests spread, lakhs of people in Bombay flocked to Gowalia Tank where a mass meeting had been scheduled and there were clashes with the authorities. There were similar disturbances on 9 August in Ahmedabad and Poona. Gradually, the movement spread to other parts of India. Thousands of people from rural areas, came out and attacked any visible symbol of British authority. In the village the most conspicuous symbol was the railway track which was being used to carry troops to different theatres of war. Hundreds of miles of the track were uprooted in one night.

Many provincial and local level leaders who had evaded arrest returned to their homes through devious routes and began organizing resistance. As the news spread further in the rural areas, the villagers joined the townsmen in recording their protest. For the first six or seven weeks after August 9, there was a tremendous mass upheaval all over the country. Disturbances took many forms. Communications were disrupted, electric and telephone wires were cut, police stations, post offices, courts, railway stations were attacked, even military vehicles were destroyed. Students came out their colleges and Universities and took to rebellious activities. Workers also struck work. In Ahmedabad, the mills were closed for three and a half months, workers in Bombay stayed away from work for over a week after 9 August. In Ballia district of U.P. mobs succeeded in capturing the entire district administration and establishing their ‘Swaraj Government’, though it lasted only for a few days. In Bihar one feature of the open rebellion was attack on the jails. Jails were taken possession of by mobs, and prisoners were set free. National flags were forcibly hoisted on public buildings in defiance of the police. Thus, there was mob violence, lawlessness, riots and disorder in different parts of the country.

The development in India in the wake of the Quit India resolution evoked disapproval in certain quarters, denunciation in others and strong action from the authorities. Some persons like the liberal leader Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Depressed Class leader, B.R. Ambedkar, the Muslim League leader Jinnah, the Hindu



Mahasabha leader V.D. Savarkar and the Sikhs were against the Quit India movement. Ambedkar described Gandhi's mass civil disobedience plan as 'irresponsible and insane' and even suggested that it was better to wait for the termination of the war for settling the dispute with England. Jinnah appealed to all Muslims to keep aloof from the movement. V.D. Savarkar, the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha, also appealed to all Hindus not to lend any support to the Congress move. The Sikhs, who had been traditionally loyal to the British, remained aloof from the movement.

The British Government pressed into service its entire machinery to suppress the Quit India movement. Brutal force was employed to deal with the 'agitators'. Villages after villages were burnt down under official supervision. Cumulative punitive fines were imposed and collected with ruthless severity. The houses of Congressmen and suspected 'rebels' were singled out and set on fire. Several hundreds heads of cattle belonging to the agitators were rounded up and summarily auctioned. Soldiers raided the houses and looted cash, jewellery, ornaments etc and set them on fire innumerable workers and peasants were tortured. In Patna eleven students were shot while attempting to hoist the national flag on the Government Secretariat building. Six died on the spot and one in hospital. In several parts of the country, particularly in some districts of Bengal and Central Provinces, women were raped by soldiers.

In an article in the 'Samaj', Baljit Singh gives graphic picture of police atrocities on people. According to him people were fired in scorching heat stripping them naked, hanging them upside down and whipping them, putting them in smoky rooms where red chillies were burning, making the naked people crawl on their stomach, and similar inhuman methods were employed by the police to terrorize people. According to a Congress estimate not less than 15,000 were killed in police firings, bombings and other atrocities. However, the Government estimate was killed-940, wounded-1,630, firing-538 times, arrests-60,229.

The brutal and all-out repression by the government, succeeded in bringing under control the mass phase of the struggle within six or seven weeks period. However, the underground movement was organized by dedicated revolutionaries in different parts of the country. An all India underground leadership with prominent members such as Achyut Patwardhan, Aruna Asaf Ali, Ram Manohar Lohia, Sucheta Kripalani, Chhotubhai Puranik, and Jayaprakash Narayan had also begun to emerge. The underground activities were carried on in Bombay, Poona, Satara, Baroda and other parts of Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra, U.P., Bihar, and Delhi. In this movement, Congress Socialists were generally in the lead.

Though the number of activists involved in the underground activities was small, they received all kinds of support from a large variety of people. Even businessmen donated generously. Others provided hideouts for the underground leaders and activists. Students acted as couriers. Pilots and train drivers delivered bombs and other material across the country. Government officials, including those in police, passed on crucial information about impending arrests.

The underground movement was aimed at organizing the disruption of communications by blowing up bridges, cutting telegraph and telephone wires, and derailing trains. There were also a few attacks on government and police officials and police informers. Dissemination of information and news was a very important part of the activity. A clandestine Congress Radio was operated from different locations in Bombay, whose broadcasts could be heard as far as Madras. The radio continued till November 1942 when it was discovered and confiscated by the police.

The British Government blamed the Congress for the disturbances in the country and held the view that the Congress had secretly devised a concerted plan of action including sabotage and violence. The attitude of the government towards the Congress was one of unconcealed hostility and disdain. The government believed that the Congress was ungrateful and had launched a gigantic mass movement without in the least bothering about the fact that the British and the Allied powers were engaged in a life and death struggle. Viceroy Linlithgow believed that Cripps Proposals were more than what could have been offered to India.

Gandhi commenced a fast in jail on 10 February 1943 in protest against the government's constant exhortation to him to condemn the violence of the people in the Quit India Movement. Gandhi not only refused to condemn the people's resort to violence but unequivocally held the government responsible for it. Through his fast he wanted to register his protest against the government violence, which included the unwarranted detention of thousands of Congressmen. Gandhi's fast aroused popular response. All over the country, there were hartals, demonstrations and strikes. Groups of people secretly reached Poona to offer Satyagraha outside the Aga Khan palace where Gandhi was being held in detention. Public meetings were held demanding his release. Even international pressure was building up for the release of Gandhi. But the Viceroy and his officials remained unmoved. The British authorities refused to show any concern for Indian feeling. The Viceroy contemptuously dismissed the consequences of Gandhi's possible death. The fast had done exactly what it had been intended to. (It raised the public morale, the anti-British feeling heightened and an opportunity was provided for political activity.

### Check Your Progress

Q.2 Enumerate the circumstances that led to the Quit India Movement.

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#### 13.2.2 Nature and significance of the Quit India Movement

The Quit India Movement was truly multi-dimensional, all-embracing and broad-based struggle for the freedom of India. It cut across the barriers of caste, creed, and community, religion and sex. It produced a spontaneous mass upheaval engulfing the entire country. The elite, the intelligentsia, the middle, the lower middle classes, lawyers, students, workers, artisans, craftsmen and peasants all participated in the movement. It was not an elite sponsored middle class movement fighting to safeguard its class interests. It essentially marked a climatic phase of the anti-imperialist struggle and the people of India as a whole came closer to each other and overcame class barriers. The Quit India Movement epitomized a conflict between the forces of nationalism and imperialism. The individual and in many instances, collective heroism and bravery in the face of heavy odds, and the readiness to suffer and sacrifice everything for the freedom of the motherland displayed by a very large number of people all over the country.

A significant feature of the Quit India Movement was the emergence of parallel governments in some parts of the country. The first such parallel government was proclaimed in Ballia in East U.P. in August 1942 under the leadership of Chittu Pande. However, this 'government' lasted only for a week. In Tamluk in the Midnapur district of Bengal, the 'Jatiya Sarkar' came into existence on 17 December 1942 and lasted till September 1944. In Maharashtra a parallel government was established at Satara which lasted for a longer period. From the very beginning the region played an active role in the Quit India Movement.

The Quit India Movement brought the youth of the country in the forefront of the struggle. Students from colleges and even schools participated in the struggle in various capacities. The participation of women in the Quit India Movement was really praiseworthy. Aruna Asaf Ali and Sucheta Kripalani were two major women organizers of the underground activities. Usha Mehta was an important member of the small group that ran the Congress radio.

In rural areas, peasants of all strata participated in the Quit India Movement especially in East U.P. and Bihar, Midnapur in Bengal, Satara in Maharashtra and other parts including Andhra, Gujarat and Kerala. Many smaller zamindars also participated in the movement, especially in U.P. and Bihar. Even some of the big zamindars maintained neutrality and refused to help the British in crushing the movement.

The spontaneous mass upheaval brought in its wake conflict, violence and destruction. It produced anarchy and chaos and the government was paralyzed for some time. The government responded to the mass struggle by unleashing a reign of terror to suppress the revolt, bringing untold miseries and sufferings to the people and causing devastation to large tracts of the countryside.

Since the Quit India Movement culminated in violence and conflict, it had been argued by a historian that 'Quit India' marked the end of the era of non-violence and that even Gandhi and senior leaders of the Congress had given up non-violent means to attain their goal. This is entirely untenable assertion. It is important to note that Gandhi's call for open rebellion was the penultimate phase in the non-violent mass action. Such an action need not have been ended in violence, given the adequate and firm leadership of the Congress and Gandhi, who withdrew the mass movement of 1920-22 at the outbreak of violence in Chauri Chaura. The mass civil disobedience movement of 1930-32 had remained by and large peaceful and non-violent under Gandhi's control and direction. There is no reason to believe that if the movement had remained under the direction of a much more powerful and organized political party like Congress in 1942, the form of political action envisaged could have remained within the framework of non-violent Satyagraha.

Another historian, Francis Hutchins, has described the Quit India Movement as 'spontaneous revolution'. The observation is full of many implications. The response of the masses indeed was spontaneous, but only after the leaders including Gandhi were arrested on 9 August 1942. Over the years, the Indian people had been able to grasp the essence of the ideology of nationalism and its philosophy of mass action advocated by the Congress, long before the Quit India call was given. A series of mass movements were launched earlier beginning with the non-cooperation movement during 1920-22. Also during the civil disobedience movement during 1930-32, the people had tested their power and strength through mass action. These movements had no doubt differed in dimensions and intensity, but each successive wave of mass movement had heightened their nationalist and political consciousness. Hence the Quit India movement as such could not be regarded as spontaneous, in the sense that it did not emerge

suddenly without any precedent or past experience or without any proper preparation.

The Quit India Movement released powerful forces. However, they were not a product of a revolutionary ideology, nor did it produce any revolution. No socio-economic revolution occurred during or after the movement, nor did it initiate or generate any great structural changes in the form of social engineering or in the nature of politics.

The Quit India Movement of 1942 is a memorable event in the history of India's freedom struggle. The great significance of this historic movement was that it placed the demand for independence on the immediate agenda of the national movement. After the Quit India movement there was no retreat. The British authorities also took note of the determination of the Indian people to face any hardships, even bullets to achieve freedom. Independence was no longer a matter of bargain. In fact the British 'quit' India within two years after the end of the Second World War.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.3 Describe the nature of the Quit India Movement. Explain its Significance.

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### **13.4 SUMMARY**

All India Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi launched two more mass movements. The movement started in 1930 came to be known as the Civil Disobedience Movement for which the factors like the appointment of Simon Commission, Nehru Report and the British attitude towards reforms in India were responsible. The second movement was the Quit India Movement launched in 1942 for which the British Government, its declaration of India in the World War II on the side of England, scorched earth policy, rendering thousand & homeless on the sea coast in Bengal and Orissa, forced war collections, War time shortages and rising prices were the reasons. Due to British policy of suppression the movement turned violent. Both the movements were withdrawn by the Congress.

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**13.5 QUESTIONS:-**

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1. Discuss the circumstances that Led the Congress to Launch the Civil Disobedience Movement.
2. Give an account of the Dandhi March of 1930.
3. Discuss the causes and consequences of the Quit India Movement.
4. Assess the events that Led to the Quit India Movement.

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**13.6 ADDITIONAL READINGS:-**

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1. Bipan Chandra, India's Strygle for Independence, 1857-1947.
2. Judith M. Brown, Gandhi and Civil Disobedience. The Mahatma in Indian Politics 1928-34.
3. S.R. Mehrotra, Towards Indian's Freedom and partition.
4. Francis G. Hutchins, Spontaneous Resolution, The Quit India Movements.



## **GROWTH OF NATIONALISM**

### **(B) All India Muslim Leagues**

### **(C) Hindu Mahasabha & Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (R.S.S.)**

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE:**

- 14. 0 Objectives
- 14. 1 Introduction
- 14.2 Muslims response to the British Conquest
- 14.3 Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh Movement
- 14.4 Establishment of the Muslim League
- 14.5 The Aims and Objectives of the Muslim League
- 14.6 Hindu Mahasabha
- 14.7 Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh
- 14.8 Summary
- 14.9 Question
- 14.10 Additional Readings

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#### **14.0 OBJECTIVES:**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to:-

- Understand the establishment of the Muslim league.
- Know the aims, objective and sessions of the Muslim league.
- Understand the important leader of the Hindu Mahasabha.
- Know the work undertaken by the Hindu Mahasabha.
- Understand the aims and objectives of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh.
- Explain the programmes and activities of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh.

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**14.1 INTRODUCTION:**

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The rise and growth of communalism during the later part of the nineteenth century continued to shape the course of Indian history during the freedom struggle. The great communal divide gradually began to harden the attitudes of the two predominant communities of India, Hindus and Muslims. The religion based communalism led to the establishment of communal organizations to streamline the aspirations of the respective communities. The religio-cultural organizations of both the Muslims and the Hindus gave way to the establishment of political organizations such as the Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha. The intense communalization of the Muslim society finally led to the partition of India and creation of Pakistan.

According to Bipin Chandra, Communalism or communal ideology comprises of three basic elements or stages. First, it is the belief that people who follow the same religion have common secular interests such as political, economic, social and cultural. This is the basic foundation of communal ideology. 'From this arises the notion of socio-political communities based on religion. The second element of communal ideology rests on the notion that in a multi-religious society like India, the secular interests of the followers of one religion are dissimilar and divergent from the interests of the followers of another religion. The third stage of communalism is reached when the interests of the followers of different religions or of different communities are seen to be mutually incompatible, antagonistic and hostile. Thus, the communalists assert at this stage that Hindus and Muslims cannot have common secular interests are bound to be opposed to each other. Communalism is, therefore, basically and above all an ideology on which communal politics is based.

The political evolution of the Muslim community was manifested by the foundation of the Indian Muslim League in 1906. It was patronized by the British authorities as a counterpoise to the Indian National Congress in pursuit of their 'divide and rule' policy. The aspirations and activities of the Muslim League ultimately led to the creation of Pakistan. In order to understand the origin and growth of the Muslim League it is important to trace the circumstances which led to the communalization of the Muslim society and the role played by the British in promoting communalism among the Muslims.



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## 14.2 MUSLIM RESPONSE TO THE BRITISH CONQUEST:

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The Muslims and Hindus responded differently to the British conquest of India. The Muslims who had been enjoying political authority and the accompanying privileges under the successive Muslim dynasties at Delhi as well as at the provincial level regarded the British as their bitterest enemies. On the other hand, the Hindus not only welcomed the British rule, but even regarded it as a deliverance from the tyrannical rule of the Muslims. The hostile attitude of the Muslims towards the British and their strong aversion to merely secular education kept them aloof from English education.

During and after the Great Revolt of 1857, the Muslims became a special target of British hatred. Many of the leading Muslim families in the areas where the revolt had raged most fiercely were uprooted. Many lost their lands and property and many were driven to poverty and misery. According to Sir Alfred Lyall, after the Revolt of 1857, 'the English turned fiercely on the Mohammedans as upon their real enemies and most dangerous rivals, so that the failure of the revolt was much more disastrous to them than to the Hindus. The Mohammedans lost almost all their remaining prestige of traditional superiority over Hindus, they forfeited for the time the confidence of their foreign rulers, and it is from this period that must be dated the loss of their numerical majority in the higher subordinate ranks of civil and military services'.

With the advent of the British rule the social relations between the Hindus and Muslim did not undergo any radical change. However, the political outlook of the two communities was very different from the beginning. While the Hindus took advantage of the English education to further their socio-economic and political interest under new dispensation, the Muslims lagged far behind the Hindus in this respect. Other factors also powerfully operated in the same direction. As a result that the two communities, though subject to the same foreign rule, suffering from the same disabilities and seeking the same remedies or reforms, could not present a united front in politics and meet on a common political platform. The difference of approach in politics between the communities was clearly manifested, for the first time, in the Wahabi movement. Although the later phase of the movement, namely, a violent hatred against the English and an organized attempt to drive them out of the country should have evoked sympathy at least among a section of the Hindus. However, there is no evidence of such sympathy. The reason for the lack of sympathy among the Hindus to the Wahabi Movement was that it was a purely Muslim movement and

was directed theoretically against all non-Muslims, its aim being to establish in India 'dar-ul-Islam', i.e., 'Muslim sovereignty pure and simple'.

The lack of cooperation among the two communities in the political activities was more evident by the fact that the Muslims did not take any active part in the different political organization which was established in different parts of the country prior to the foundation of the Indian National Congress. There was hardly any Muslim on the committees of Landholders Society, Bengal British Indian Society and the British Indian Association.

In 1863, Abdul Latif, a leading public servant and one of the first Bengali Muslims proficient in English, organized the Mohammedan Literacy and Scientific Society of Calcutta, to represent those 'Bengal Mussulmans who wish to adopt English education and European customs ... without contravening the essential principles of Islam, or ruffling the traditional prejudices of their Mohammedan fellow countrymen'. Its purpose was primarily educational and social. As the leader of one section of Calcutta's small community of educated Muslims, Latif was regularly consulted by the government, and the Literary Society intentionally avoided any adventurousness in its politics.

In 1878, Nawab Amir Khan founded the National Mohammedan Association. Amir Ali held that Muslim fortunes would not revive by Muslim efforts alone. Government help was essential, and if it was to be won, Muslims needed a political organization of their own. Thus, when he was invited by Surendranath Bannerjee to join the Indian Association, he refused to do so. In its memorial of 1882, the National Mohammedan Association listed its demands - a proportion of jobs to be reserved for the Muslims, less emphasis to be placed on University education as a qualification for office, no simultaneous examinations for the covenanted service and no competitive examinations for the uncovenanted, and the provision for the special educational requirements of the Muslim community. To associate Muslims in other parts of India with their demands, the Bengal pressure group tried to extend its field of action. Branches of the National Mohammedan Association were established in different parts of the country with its headquarters at Calcutta. To highlight its new role, the Association changed its name. Amir Ali travelled around India visiting other Muslim centres to learn about the problems of his fellow-Muslims. In 1884, the Association proposed an annual conference of Muslims from all over India. Thus, almost two years before the first Indian National Congress was convened, a separate Muslim political conference had been suggested.

Gradually, the Muslim leaders began to appreciate the value of the English education. In a public meeting held on 10 January 1868, Abdul Latif made a vigorous plea for the English education of the Muslim boys. Suggestions were made for the transformation of the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta, Madras to the status of a college. The Muslim leaders in Bengal thus took a lead in this matter even before Sir Syed Ahmed Khan thought of the Aligarh College. Although the proposal of Abdul Latif was not put into effect, Muslim education in Bengal got a great impetus from the munificent charity of Haji Muhammad Moshin in 1873. He left a large legacy, and it was resolved by the government that out of the Moshin Trust Fund, two-third of the fees would be paid to every Muslim student in any English school or college in Bengal. This partly accounts for the greater progress of Muslim students of Bengal in English education as compared to other provinces. Although the progress in English education advanced political ideas of Muslims in Bengal, there was still a wide gap between the progressive elements of the two communities. The Muslim leaders lagged far behind the advanced political thinkers among the Hindus, and the Muslim politics always resembled more or less that of the Hindus nearly half a century before.

The legislation for local self-government on elective basis led to acute differences between the Hindu and Muslim communities, it was on this occasion that for the first time a demand for separate representation for the Muslims was made. It seems, however, that, as in later days, the ball was set rolling by the English officials. The Commissioner of the Presidency Division observed in his report, 'that the agitators in this matter are Hindus, and that local Boards, instituted as proposed, will be comprised almost entirely of the Hindus to the exclusion of the Mohammedans'. So far evidence goes, Muslim politics, throughout the nineteenth century, has followed a course different from that of the Hindus. While the Hindus were developing their political ideas and political organizations on modern lines under the influence of English education, the Muslims launched the Wahabi Movement which was most violent and anti-British, and extremely communal in character.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1 Bring out the causes of the rise of Muslim League.

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### 14.3 SYED AHMED KHAN AND THE ALIGARH MOVEMENT :

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In Northern India Muslims, not Bengalis were traditionally the dominant community. After the Revolt of 1857, there were two main threats to their position. One was the conviction in official circles that Muslims had been responsible for the revolt. The other was the growing competition both from Bengalis and local Hindus. Syed Ahmad Khan was the first to look synoptically at these problems. He felt that unless Muslims could be persuaded to come to terms with their Christian rulers and the new learning, they would continue to fall behind 'in the race for position among the magnates of the world.' They would remain inflexibly orthodox, their rulers would discriminate against them, and more adaptable groups would usurp their position and offices.

Syed Ahmad Khan was born in 1817. He began his career as an official of the British Government at the age of twenty. At the time of the Revolt of 1857, he was serving the Company's Government in a subordinate judicial post. He remained loyal and asked his coreligionists to behave likewise. He saved the local Europeans by successful diplomacy, first with the mutineers and then with Nawab Mahmud Khan. His loyal services were recognized by the grateful British Government and he was given a distinguished position after the Revolt of 1857. Syed Ahmad Khan utilized the opportunity not for advancing his own material interests, but for the upliftment of his co-religionists. He pondered deeply over the deplorable condition of the Muslim community and made a noble resolve to take up its cause.

Syed Ahmed Khan tried to restore the good name of his community by denying that the Revolt had been a Muslim conspiracy. He argued that Bahadur Shah's cause had been self-evidently hopeless, and since the English Government did not interfere with the Muslims in the practice of their religion, they had no reason to launch a 'Jihad'. Most of them, according to Syed, had in fact stood by the Raj.

Together with these political vindications, Syed Ahmad Khan wanted to give new orientations in religion. Without this, his educational projects could not have succeeded. He had to show that western learning was compatible with the faith. On the assumption that the Quran was the only reliable guide to Islam, Syed set himself to formulate traditional Quranic teachings anew, so as to avoid all that was irrational in Islam. This brought him into conflict with the ulemas and all their orthodox followers in northern India.

Education was the heart of Syed's policy of reconciliation and his panacea for the community. 'If the Muslims do not take to the system of education introduced by the British, they will not only remain a backward community, but will sink lower and lower until there will be no hope of recovery left to them... The adoption of new system of education does not mean the renunciation of Islam...' He traced the sad plight of the Muslims to their innate conservatism which made them averse to English education and western culture.

In 1864, Syed Ahmad Khan put his ideas into practice by forming the Translation Society, later known as the Scientific Society of Aligarh, and his visit to England in 1869 strengthened his convictions. In an excess of enthusiasm he wrote from England that 'all good things, spiritual and worldly... have been bestowed by the Almighty on Europe, and specially on England... Unless Muslims assimilate these arts and sciences into our own language, we shall remain in this wretched state'.

At first Syed Ahmad Khan had argued that the best way of bringing western learning to the people of his province was through the vernacular, but later he became convinced that English must be the medium. His most notable educational achievement was the foundation of the Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which became a great centre for the spread of western knowledge and the study of Islamic ideas. The reform movement among the Muslims initiated by Syed Ahmad Khan came to be known as the Aligarh Movement.

In the address presented to Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, who laid the foundation-stone of the college in 1877, it was said that British rule in India was the most wonderful phenomenon the world had ever seen, and that the object of the college was to make this fact clear to the Indians, to educate them about the blessings of such rule as also 'to reconcile oriental' learning with western literature and science, to inspire in the dreamy minds of the people of the East the practical energy which belongs to those of the west'.

The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh provided for liberal education in arts and sciences through the medium of English language under the succession of able principals, recruited from England. It was a residential institution and helped a great deal in developing the mental outlook and personality of the young Muslim students on progressive lines. Syed Ahmad Khan also started the Mohammedan Educational Conference as a general forum for spreading liberal ideas among the members of his community. He gathered around him a group of faithful followers who spread his ideas with great success. Syed Ahmed Khan, thus, inaugurated a new era in the life of Indian Muslims and infused fresh blood into the Muslim community. The Aligarh Movement, thus inaugurated by Syed Ahmed Khan, is no less remarkable in

the political evolution of the Indian Muslims. In the ultimate form it is definitely anti-Congress and anti-Hindu. However, this communal characteristic was not distinctly perceptible at its inception.

Theodore Beck, the Principal of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College who regarded himself as a disciple of Syed Ahmad Khan in matters political, claimed that Indian Muslim thought resembled the old Tory school of England far more than Radical and that Indian Muslims were not very enthusiastic about democratic institutions as was generally believed. Beck was entirely hostile to the Congress. In May 1888 he said that its methods of holding public meetings, showing the ills of the people and circulating pamphlets would sooner or later cause a mutiny. Beck made a systematic effort to divide the Hindus and Muslims. His contribution to the anti-Hindu bias in Aligarh Movement was very considerable. Beck wrote continuously in the 'Aligarh Institute Gazette', of which Syed Ahmad Khan was the editor, against the Congress and thus became the target of the nationalist press.

Beck was succeeded as principal by Theodore Morrison, who was in charge of the London Office of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Defense Association Morrison who continued in this post till 1905 was a pupil of Beck. He was alarmed at the growing political solidarity among the Muslims. Thus, he tried to wean away the Muslims from political agitation and divert their energies to educational and economic upliftment of their community. Due to the efforts of the first two principals of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, an open manifestation of hostility against the Indian National Congress formed the basic creed of the Aligarh Movement.

In 1883 the Mohammedan Civil Service Association had been set up to help Muslim students to go to England to compete for the civil service examination. The efforts of this Association did not prove successful. For a long time no Muslim could enter the civil service. This upset Syed Ahmad Khan and he lost faith in competitive examinations. The Mohammedan Civil Service Association presented a memorial to Lord Ripon, the Viceroy, and demanding appointment of Muslims to the civil service through nomination and not by examination.

Syed Ahmad Khan opposed the Congress demand for representative institutions, saying that such institutions had never been introduced under foreign rule. The principles on which an empire was based were different from those that sustained a representative government. He further argued that the Muslims, who once established their rule in India, knew how to run an empire, but the English educated Bengalis, who were vocal in the Congress, were utterly ignorant of the same.

Syed Ahmad Khan had no love for English parliamentary institutions. He was of the opinion that such institutions could work successfully only in a homogeneous country like England but not in India, which suffered from deep seated religious differences. Besides, the introduction of representative institutions in India would give the Hindus, who were the majority community and who had taken western education earlier, a distinct advantage over the Muslims. He further claimed that in India where the people were not homogeneous, they would vote only on the basis of religious differences. As a result that the majority community would dominate the Indian Parliament and establish government English in name but Hindu in reality. Accordingly, he asked the British rulers not to ignore the fact that India was a continent, 'not a small and homogeneous country like England, Scotland, Wales or Ireland'.

Syed Ahmad Khan felt that if the British left India then the Hindus and the Muslims would not be able to live together peacefully. In March 1888 he asked that if the English army left India then was it possible that the 'two nations - the Muslims and the Hindus - could sit on the same throne and remain equal in power ? Most certainly not. It is necessary that one of them should conquer the other and thrust it down'.

Syed Ahmed Khan, the father of the Muslim renaissance was radical so far as educational and social questions were concerned, but he was conservative in political matters. Syed Ahmad Khan passed away in 1898. Both the Aligarh Movement and its founder have been severely criticized and condemned by a class of writers, mostly Hindus. They rightly point out that this movement was responsible for bringing about the conflict between the Hindus and Muslims and promoting communalism in the Indian sub-continent. The Aligarh Movement finally led to the foundation of the Muslim League and the creation of Pakistan.

### Check Your Progress

Q.2 Write a note on Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

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#### 14.4 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE:

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Through the Aligarh Movement Syed Ahmad Khan had already made the Indian Muslims politically conscious. He also succeeded in alienating the Muslims from the Congress and winning the sympathy and confidence of the British rulers to their cause. However, to channelize their political aspirations, the Muslims lacked a broad-based political organization at the turn of the twentieth century. With the establishment of the Muslim League in 1906, the Muslims entered a new era of political manifestation and organization.

The Congress movement was assuming a militant tone by the turn of the twentieth century. Towards the end of 1903, the Governor General, Lord Curzon announced a plan for the partition of Bengal. This announcement led to an outburst of public indignation all over the province. When the Government of India announced, on 7 July 1905, the scheme of partition, there were public meetings and demonstrations all over the country. One month after the announcement of the partition of the province Congress launched the Swadeshi movement against the British. Thus the situation in India was deteriorating. The new Viceroy, Lord Minto, who assumed office in November 1905, felt seriously concerned about the situation. Minto wrote to the Secretary of State, John Morley that he was thinking of 'a possible counterpoise to Congress aims', and that he had in his mind the formation of a Privy Council of the native rulers and few other 'big' men which would give ideas different from those of the Congress. Morley in turn warned Minto that the Muslims were likely to throw their lot with the Congressmen against him.

Meanwhile the Viceroy began to devise plans to wean away the Muslims from the Congress movement. He started working on a scheme of reforms to satisfy at least the moderate elements in India. This spurred the Muslim leaders into action. They were faced by the fact that since the Indian Councils Act of 1892, not only the principle of representation but also in practice the principle of election introduced in the constitution of the provincial legislature. They felt that another scheme of reforms was sure to confirm and extend the elective principle.

As soon as it was known that the reform was in the air and the Viceroy had appointed a Committee to consider, among others, the question of extending the representative element in the Legislative Council. Nawab Moshin-ul-Mulk, who succeeded Syed Ahmad Khan as leader, decided to wait upon the Viceroy in a deputation at Simla. The Deputation consisted of 36 members with Agha Khan as their leader. The Deputation was received by Lord Minto on 1



October 1946. The address presented by the deputation demanded several special concessions for the Muslim community.

First, that 'the position accorded to the Mohammedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength but also with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire', and with due regard to 'the position they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago.

Second, that the methods of nomination as well as of election prevailing hitherto had failed to give them the proper type or adequate number of representatives, and that in the proposed reforms they should be given the right of sending their own representatives themselves through separate communal electorates.

Besides these two important demand, the deputation also asked for greater representation in the services, protection of their interests in case an Indian Executive Councillor was appointed, help in founding a Muslim University, abolition of competitive examinations for recruitment to the services, appointment of Muslim judges in every High Court and Chief Court, communal electorate for municipalities, and Muslim electoral colleges for election to Legislative Councils.

After some preliminary observations of a general nature, Lord Minto assured the deputation that 'in any system of representation, whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase the electoral organization, the Mohammedan community should be represented' as a community, (and its) position should be estimated not merely on numerical strength but in respect to its political importance and the service it has rendered to the Empire'.

This assurance given by Lord Minto heralded a new policy of British rule in India. In the first place, it gave the official seal of approval to the principle that the Hindus and the Muslims constituted practically two separate nations with different interests and different outlook. In the second place, the government practically promised to show undue favour to the Muslims in respect of their number of representatives in the Legislative Council, by making it far in excess of their numerical ratio to the whole population. These two points formed the chief planks in Muslim politics ever since, and it may be said without much exaggeration that they formed the foundation on which Pakistan was built about forty years later. It has been pointed out that the

deputation of the Muslim leaders was really engineered by the British as a deliberate step to drive a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims, and Minto regarded this move as a 'possible counterpoise' to the Congress which he regarded as disloyal and dangerous. Here again, it was a Principal of the Aligarh College, Archibald, who like his two predecessors. Beck and Morrison guided Muslim politics in a way which was favourable to the government and most injurious to the interests of the Hindus.

The Muslims were naturally quite happy with the favourable reception that the government accorded to their-deputation. The partition of Bengal and the events that followed also filled them, with a new zeal and quickened their political consciousness. They felt the need to have a central political organization to promote the political interest of the entire Muslim community. Syed Ahmad Khan had not encouraged the idea of such organizations as he regarded them as unnecessary. He had implicit faith in the justice of the British Government. His English friends also supported his view, as they were afraid that if the Muslims were politically organized, they might follow in the footsteps of the Hindus and may turn against the British.

The situation was, however, completely changed, first by the partition of Bengal, and next by the announcement of the coming constitutional reforms. The anti-partition agitation among the Hindus was mounting high and the Congress championed their cause. Under these circumstances the Muslims felt the need to have their own central political organization in order to counteract the political organization of the Hindus. Taking advantage of the presence of a large number of eminent Muslim leaders at Decca in connection with the Mohammedan Educational Conference, Nawab Salimullah of Decca convened a meeting and proposed the scheme of a Central Mohammedan Association to look exclusively after the interests of the Muslim community. He said that it would provide scope for the participation of Muslim youth in politics and thereby prevent them from joining the Indian National Congress. The proposal was accepted and at a meeting held on 30 December 1906, the All India Muslim League was established.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.3 Narrate the programmes and Policies of the Muslim League.

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### **14.5 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE:**

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The aims and objectives of the Muslim League were laid down as the following - (1) To promote, amongst the Musalmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intentions of Government with regard to Indian measures. (2) To protect and advance the political rights of the Musalmans of India and respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government. (3) To prevent the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feelings of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the aforesaid objects of the League.

The communal spirit to which the Muslim League owed its origin in December 1906, characterized its activities during the next seven years, and its chief objective throughout this period was to secure political and other advantages for the Muslims at the cost of the Hindus.

The first annual session of the Muslim League was held at Karachi on 29 December 1907. The choice of the venue was an indication of the new nationalism which was growing among the Muslims. Sindh was chosen because, as a League publication put it, 'Sindh is that pious place in India, where Muhammad bin Qasim came first, with the torch of religion and the gift of Hadis. No other place could appeal to our elders'.

In the second annual session of the League held at Amritsar on 30 December 1908, there was a prolonged discussion on the forthcoming constitutional reforms. The President of the League and over-whelming majority of the delegates strongly supported the scheme of separate electorate and opposed with equal vehemence the modification proposed by the Secretary of State.

As the reforms of 1909 conceded to the Muslims practically all that they had demanded some political leaders regarded the time as favourable to bring about a rapprochement between the Hindus and the Muslims. Accordingly a conference was held at Allahabad on 1 January 1911, which was attended by about 60 Hindus and 40 Muslims. G.K. Gokhale, who took the leading part, 'asked the conference to remember that Muslim fear of being dominated by the Hindu majority should not be lightly treated. The conference dispersed after appointing a Committee which did nothing in the course of time.

Political consciousness was steadily growing among the Indian Muslims. From 1912 onwards the Muslims became more

militant. The Muslim middle classes developed increasing political maturity in the years immediately preceding the First World War. The Young Turk Movement led by Enver Pasha in Turkey also greatly influenced the Indian Muslims in the direction of a programme of self-government for India, which was subsequently adopted by the Muslim League in 1913. The Muslims steadily began to be drawn into the orbit of national movement. The Muslim League at its Lucknow session on 1913 adopted the goal of 'attainment under the aegis of the British Crown, the self-government suited to India'.

However, events soon happened both in India and far outside its borders which alienated the Muslims from the British and drew them closer to the Hindus. The first was the annulment of the partition of Bengal, which gave a rude shock to the Muslim community and was regarded as a breach of faith on the part of the British rulers. But far more important was the British hostility to Islam as evidenced by British occupation of Egypt, Anglo-French Agreement with regard to Morocco, Anglo-Russian Agreement with regard to Persia and the Italian invasion of Tripoli.

After the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the British Government took strong measures against political leaders and groups among the Muslims as it considered their activities detrimental to the efficient conduct of the war. Both the Muslim League and the Congress held their respective sessions at Lucknow in 1916. The common cause against the British brought about the Lucknow Pact between the Congress and the Muslim League. England was at war against Turkey, a Muslim state and this had aroused strong Muslim sentiments against the British. The Lucknow Pact was the first instance of collaboration between the two organizations. The Pact provided greater weightage with separate electorates to the Muslims in areas where they constituted a minority, and demanded from the British Government that definite steps should be taken towards self-government by granting the reforms. The League with the Muslim middle classes as its predominant social basis was steadily orienting towards nationalist conceptions and aims though on its own communal basis. At its session at Delhi in 1918, the Muslim League passed a resolution demanding the application of the principle of self-determination to India.

The Indian Muslims were indignant at the terms of the Treaty of Sevres imposed by the victorious Allies on Turkey. By this treaty, Turkey was deprived of her homelands such as Syria, Palestine, Arabia and other Asiatic zones to the Ottoman Empire. They argued that their holy places situated in these territories should always be under the rule of the Sultan of Turkey who was also the Kalifa or the religious head of the Muslims all over the world.

Gandhi and other Congress leaders supported the Khilafat issue and allied with... Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali in organizing the powerful Khilafat Movement in India. However, with the abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal Pasha in Turkey, the Khilafat Movement lost its purpose. Hence, the Muslim League began to drift from cooperation with the Congress towards confrontation which finally led to the demand of a separate state for the Muslims and the creation of Pakistan which will be discussed later.

### Check Your Progress

Q.4 Discuss the aims and objectives of the Muslim League.

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## 14.6 HINDU MAHASABHA:

### 14.6.1 Foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha:

The Hindu Mahasabha was originally founded as a social, cultural and religious organization and not as a political body. A Hindu Sabha was formed in 1907 in the Punjab. Later in 1915, the All India Hindu Mahasabha party was founded in the Punjab where the Hindu minority which had the monopoly of wealth power and talent, was given a bad deal both in the new legislation and the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. The Hindu Mahasabha was opposed to the Muslim orientation of the Congress and not to the Congress itself. However, it was in direct conflict with the Muslim League.

The first important session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held in 1923. it was attended by many Congressmen including the Ali Brothers and Abul Kalam Azad.

With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the Hindu Mahasabha became more Hinduised. It justified making converts to Hinduism. This was to stem the tide of conversion of Hindus, particularly untouchables to Islam and Christianity. Originally, Hindu Mahasabha did not have much mass appeal as it comprised largely of zamindars and princes along with landlords, teachers, government servants and the like. It opposed separate electorates which was the persistent demand of the Muslim League. As Hindu-Muslim riots spread, more and more Congressmen began to come

over to the Hindu Mahasabha, specially in support of its 'suddhi' and 'sanghatana' movements.

#### **14.6.2 Important Leader of the Hindu Mahasabha:**

The most important leader of the Hindu Mahasabha was Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Savarkar, born in 1883, was a Chitpavan Brahmin. Later at the age of sixteen, he was deeply disturbed at the hanging of the Chapekar brothers by the British Government. Savarkar took a pledge that he would participate in an armed revolution and even lay down his life for freeing the country. In January 1900 he started 'Mitra Mela', later known as 'Abhinava Bharat', an organization of firebrands and revolutionaries. In 1905 Savarkar organized a bonfire of foreign cloth and the crowd that gathered was addressed by Tilak. Because of such activities he was expelled from the Ferguson College, Poona. with the help of Shyamji Krishna Varma, the India revolutionary leader in London, Tilak arranged for Savarkar's study there on the condition that Savarkar would never accept a government job. Shyamji Krishna Varma was so impressed by the devotion of Savarkar that he entrusted to Savarkar the management of his India House in London.

In July 1909 Madanlal Dhingra assassinated Sir Curzon Wylie. The British press charged that Dhingra was inspired by Savarkar. Savarkar had drafted a statement, which Dhingra read in court, in which he claimed that he was a soldier in the Indian war of independence against the British. Dhingra was sentenced to death and hanged. Savarkar was arrested and was sent to India. He was tried in March 1911 and was sentenced to fifty years' imprisonment. He was sent to Andamans. Later in 1923, he was brought to India and was interned at Ratnagiri. He was released in 1924 on the condition that he would not take part in political activities. Later he joined the Hindu Mahasabha and was its president for several years.

Savarkar's ideas on Hinduism were espoused in his treatise 'Hindutva', published in 1923. In 'Hindutva' he detailed the geographical, racial, religious and other factors which contributed to the making of the 'Hindu nation.' Savarkar was convinced that Hindu civilization which had 'survived through the centuries, whereas many others had perished, was the best. He glorified Vedic Hinduism. Savarkar wanted the Hindus, or at least Hindu ideas, to have pre-eminent position in the Indian subcontinent.

Savarkar said that the India Muslims, who went for Haj to other countries, did not look upon India as their own country. He also denounced Pan-Islamism and maintained that the Hindus could never resign their rights as a majority community. In his introduction to 'The Indian War of Independence' he had, however,

stated, that the feelings of hatred against the Muslims, though justified in Shivaji's time, would be unjust and foolish if nursed now.

According to Savarkar a Hindu meant a person who regarded the land of 'Bharatvarsha' from the Indus to the seas, as his fatherland as well as his holy-land, the cradle-land of his religion. He believed that there were three fundamental bonds which united the Hindus. the territorial, the racial and the cultural, the bonds of 'rashtra, jati, and samskriti'. Territorially, a Hindu is one who felt an attachment to the geographical area extending from the Sindhu river to the Brahmaputra and from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Racially, a Hindu was one 'whose first and discernable source could be traced to the Himalayan altitude of the Vedic Saptasindhu'. Culturally, a Hindu was one who felt pride in Hindu culture and civilization. These three bonds constituted 'Hindutva', which was a broader and more comprehensive concept of Hinduism. Savarkar's definition of 'Hindutva' was a novel one. Previously attempts had been made to define Hindus on the basis of beliefs or doctrines, but Savarkar emphasized the cultural and historical aspects in the definition of a Hindu.

Savarkar wanted to build a militant Hindu nation. He had no faith in nonviolence. He hailed the heroes of history who had used violence to attain just ends. During the Second World War, Savarkar raised the slogan 'Hinduize all politics and militarize Hinduism', and called upon his co-religionists to enlist in the armed forces for learning the art of warfare. The Hindu Mahasabha which supported the war effort of the British did not take part in the Quit India Movement. This politically harmed the Hindu Mahasabha and it fared badly in the 1945-46 election.

Savarkar was not in agreement with Gandhi's nonviolence. He was also not a supporter of Gandhi's love of villages and cottage industries. He denounced Gandhi's decentralist policy. In his presidential address at the 1931 session of the Hindu Mahasabha he said, 'We shall first of all welcome the machine. This is a machine age. The handicrafts will have their due place, but national production will have to be on the biggest possible scale'

Savarkar did not believe in class struggle. According to him class collaboration was essential for building a prosperous economy. The interest of both capital and labour would have to be subordinated to the interests of the nation. Savarkar wanted the state to take steps to maximize production and to keep strict control over strikes and lock-outs. Savarkar's economics was not so much capitalistic or socialistic as "Hindu 'Sanghatanist'". His aim was to safeguard the interests of the Hindu wherever and whenever they threatened by the 'economic aggression of the non- Hindus'. He asked members of the Hindu Mahasabha to ensure that the Hindu

peasants, Hindu traders and Hindu labourers 'did not suffer at the hands of non-Hindu aggression.'

Savarkar was opposed to separate electorates, which created, situation in which a Hindu could not get a single Muslim vote, for the constituency itself was communal, and a Muslim could vote only for a Muslim. He charged that the Congress was pampering the Muslims, first by agreeing to separate electorates and, then, by giving them greater representation than what they would have been entitled to on the basis of their numbers. Hindu Mahasabha leaders claimed that the Congress policy of appeasement had widened the gulf between Hindus and Muslims, and had jeopardized the rights of the Hindus.

Savarkar asked the Hindus to consolidate and strengthen Hindu nationality. Savarkar's concept of nationality was based on cultural, racial and historical affinities. He claimed that in Europe, during the last three to four centuries, only those nations such as England, France, Germany, Italy and Portugal, which had developed racial, linguistic, cultural and other organic affinities, in addition to territorial unity had survived.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was another important leader of the Hindu Mahasabha. He was also a member of the Congress. In his presidential address at the special session of the Mahasabha in 1924, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya argued that the Mahasabha was not a communal organization and was not antagonistic to the Congress. The Hindu Mahasabha, he claimed, would supplement the work of the Congress. He argued that, the Congress being a political body, could not deal with social and non-political matters such as untouchability, inter-caste jealousies, child marriage and various other social abuses. But the Mahasabha could deal with them and also safeguard the interests of the Hindus. Thus, Malaviya had envisaged a socio-cultural role for the Hindu Mahasabha. However, this role was superseded by its political role. Decision to participate in the elections was taken in 1926 and the Mahasabha became primarily, if not exclusively, a political body. Thus, the Hindu Mahasabha became a party of the Hindus and the Muslim League was a party of the Muslims.

The Hindu Mahasabha strongly opposed the demand for the establishment of a separate state for the Muslims and attacked Gandhi for eventually agreeing to the partition of.. the country. Gandhi's attitude to the question of partition and his ceaseless work for lessening Hindu-Muslim tension angered some people and in 1948 N.V. Godse assassinated him.



**Check Your Progress**

Q.5 State the circumstances that Led to the formation of the Hindu Mahasabha. What were its policies and Programmes?

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**14.7 RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH (R.S.S.):**


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**14.7.1 Foundation of RSS:**

In pre-independence India, the chief nationalist organization was the Indian National Congress. It was an umbrella organization which accommodated a variety of interests, including the revivalists. In order to retain the support of its diverse membership, the Congress adopted a consensual strategy requiring the acceptance of compromise and, by extension, the principle of territorial nationalism. However, it was not entirely successful in accommodating all groups. Many Muslim leaders, for example, felt that the westernized Hindu-elite who controlled the Congress did not adequately respond to Muslim interests. Moreover, there were Hindu revivalist leaders, who also believed that the interests of the Hindu community were not adequately protected by the Congress.

The founder of the RSS doubted whether the Congress, which included Muslims, could bring about the desired unity of the Hindu community.

The RSS was established in 1925 as a kind of educational body whose objective was to train a group of Hindu men who, on the basis of their character-building experience in the RSS, would work to unite the Hindu community so that India could again become an independent country and a creative society. Its founder was convinced that a fundamental change in social attitudes was necessary precondition of a revived India. A properly trained cadre of nationalists would play an important role in that change.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was founded by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar (1889-1940), an Andhra Brahmin who had settled in Maharashtra. He was a close friend of Savarkar and a member of the Hindu Mahasabha until 1929. Hedgewar realized that the cause of India's decline was the divisive and fragmented character of Hindu society. Thus, he wanted to build a cohesive

corporate life for the Hindus. To achieve this he did not regard politics as important. What important was religious and social regeneration. Hedgewar was of the opinion that this could be achieved only on the basis of the revival and purification of Hindu 'Sanskriti', which was to be brought about by devoted 'Swayam Sevaks', i.e. volunteers.

The RSS emerged during a wave of Hindu-Muslim riots that swept across India in the early 1920s. Hedgewar viewed the communal rioting as a symptom of the weakness and divisions within the Hindu community. He believed that the Congress, in which he had been an active participant, had appeased Muslims and was therefore unable to unite the Hindus. In his opinion Hindu unity was the necessary precondition of any successful independence struggle.

As a result of the intensification of Hindu-Muslim tension between 1921-1923, the dormant Hindu Mahasabha, formed in 1915 as a forum for a variety of Hindu interests was revitalized. The challenge from Islam in the early 1920s was viewed by many Hindus as a threat to their self-esteem. This proliferation of Hindu 'Sabha' and other "defensive" Hindu associations were reactions to the growing communal violence, the increasing political articulation of the Muslim community, the cultural 'Islamization' of the Muslims and the failure to achieve independence. While these organizations probably had little effect on British policy, they did advance Hindu unity. It is in this setting of Hinduism in danger that the RSS was established.

The roots of the RSS are imbedded in the soil of Maharashtra. its membership and symbols were almost exclusively Maharashtrian. its discipline and ideological framework were shaped almost entirely by Dr. Hedgewar, a medical doctor who had abandoned a potentially lucrative practice to participate in the struggle against colonialism. According to his most reliable biographer, the Hedgewar family migrated from Hyderabad, a Muslim princely state and settled in Nagpur around the turn of the nineteenth century.

As a young student, Hedgewar was keenly interested in history and politics, specially the life history of Shivaji. He read Tilak's 'Kesari', a nationalist weekly published from Pune, and drifted into the nationalist circle of youth which formed around Dr. Balkrishna Shivaram Munje, a young doctor who had returned to Nagpur from the Boer war. Dr. Munje was a major influence in his life. Hedgewar enthusiastically accepted, Munje's militant nationalism and was expelled from several schools because of his participation in anti-British activities.

During his six years in Calcutta, Hedgewar joined the Anushilan Samiti, a revolutionary society based in Bengal. With Germany's defeat in the First World War, revolutionary fervour diminished. Public apathy and the lack of commitment on the part of many fellow revolutionaries embittered Hedgewar. It is likely that his political mentor, Dr. Munje persuaded him to join the Congress. The Rashtriya Mandal, the Hedgewar was accepted into its inner circles.

During the early 1920s, Hedgewar became even more deeply engaged in Congress party activities. At the 1920 annual Congress session in Nagpur, he organized a volunteer unit of some 1,200 young men to keep order at the meeting.

The outbreak of communal riots in 1923 made Hedgewar to think that the disunity among Hindus was a major social problem. On 30 October 1923, the Collector banned Dindi procession. But influential Hindus decided to disobey the ban. One newspaper reported that upto 20,000 Hindus marched in defiance of the government order. Hindu leaders were surprised not only by the popular response, but also by the involvement of most segments of the Hindu community. Out of this defiance emerge the Nagpur Hindu Sabha. Dr. Munje was chosen the vice-president of the local sabha and Hedgewar became its secretary. Hindu revivalists such as Hedgewar saw that organization was necessary, but they argued that more was needed to protect Hindu interests. They argued that the Hindu community should adopt a more martial 'kshatriya' (warrior) world view.

During the period of escalating Hindu-Muslim animosity in Nagpur, Hedgewar was to develop the intellectual foundations of RSS. A Major influence on his thinking a handwritten manuscript of Savarkar's 'Hindutva' which advanced the thesis the Hindus was a nation. The central propositions of Savarkar's manuscript are Hindu's are the indigenous people of the subcontinent and that they form a national group. He defines Hindu as a person who feels united by blood ties all those whose ancestry can be traced to Hindu antiquity and who accepts from the Indus River in the north, to the Indian Ocean, as his fatherland (Pitrubhumi).

Though Savarkar's work provided Hedgewar with an intellectual justification for concept of a Hindu nation that embraced all the peoples of the subcontinent, it did not give him a method for uniting the Hindu community. Hedgewar had experimented revolution, Satyagraha, and constitutional reform, but each method for uniting the Hindu community, he felt, had failed to achieve independence or national rejuvenation believed that independence and national revitalization could be achieved only when, the root cause of India's weakness was discovered. Some time in 1924-25,

Hedgewar felt himself assured that he had discovered the cause. According to him fundamental problem was psychological and what was required was an inner transformation to rekindle a sense of national consciousness and social cohesion. He created a cadre of persons committed to national reconstruction, he believed it would be little difficulty in sustaining a movement of revitalization, which would be independence as one of its objectives.

In September 1925 on the Hindu festival of Dasera, Hedgewar launched his new movement of Hindu revitalization. The first participants were recruited from a largely Brahmin locality in Nagpur. This early group had neither a name nor developed Programme of activities. The participants were expected to attend an 'akhara' (gymnasium) during the week and take part in political classes on Sunday and Thursday.

Hedgewar selected the first mission of the young organization with great care. wanted to demonstrate the value of discipline to both the volunteers and to the general public, and chose a popular religious occasion, Ram-Navami, to do so. According to Hedgewar's biographer, the chaotic conditions around the temple at Ramtek, a village near Nagpur during the Ram-Navami festival, created great hardships to the worshipers. Moreover, many villagers were reportedly cheated by Muslim fakirs' and 'Brahmin pandits'. Hedgewar decided to take his volunteers to the 1926 festival to remedy the situation. For the occasion, he chose both the name and the uniform of the organization. The 'Swayamsevak', in their new uniforms, marched to temple singing verses from Ramdas. According to RSS sources, they enforced queues for the worshippers visiting the temple housing the main idol, provided drinking water, and drove off the corrupt priests. .

Soon after this dramatic introduction to the public, 'lathi' instruction and group prayers were incorporated into the RSS discipline. In the same year, a large open area was acquired and military training was introduced by Martandrao Jog, a former officer in the army of the Maharaja of Gwalior, who was to become the head of the military section of the RSS. To strengthen their sense of discipline, volunteers were required to wear their uniforms to the RSS meetings, and a bugle corps was formed to accompany the volunteers when they marched through the streets of Nagpur. In 1926, the first daily 'shakha' (branch) was held, and the practice of meeting daily was quickly adopted by the RSS group. Ninety-nine young men were accepted into RSS membership in 1928 by taking a life oath in a forest close to Nagpur. The oath was administered before the 'bhagva dhvaj', an ochre-coloured standard associated with Shivaji. In RSS ritual, this standard is a symbol of the unity of all Hindus, and it is the 'guru' to which each 'Swayamsevak' commits himself when he joins the organization.

When communal riots broke out in Nagpur in September 1927, Anna Sohoni, a former revolutionary and close associate of Hedgewar, organized RSS members into sixteen squads to protect various Hindu neighbourhoods in the city.

Hedgewar's revolutionary past and the paramilitary nature of the RSS convinced the Central Provinces Home Department that RSS could develop into a dangerous revolutionary group, and this suspicion continued throughout the pre-independence period. In fact, the RSS remained scrupulously nonpolitical and it was not until after independence that it began seriously to consider political activities.

Hedgewar's stress on the educational role of the RSS led some of his senior colleagues, who wanted it to take a more activist stance, to leave the organization. Anna Sohoni, one of his closest colleagues, withdrew from the RSS in 1928 when Hedgewar vetoed Sohoni's proposal to march uniformed RSS members in front of a mosque on Friday as an unnecessary provocative act. While Hedgewar permitted RSS members to take part in political activities in their individual capacity, he was careful to keep the RSS aloof from them.

The RSS movement gradually began to expand. Because of its growth, Hedgewar called senior RSS leaders to Nagpur in November 1929, to evaluate its work and to consider ways to coordinate the expanding network of 'shakhas'. They decided that the organization should have one supreme guide, 'sarsanghchalak', who would have absolute decision making power. He would choose all office bearers and personally supervise the activities of the RSS. By a unanimous decision of the senior workers, Hedgewar was acclaimed the first 'sarsanghchalak.'

In the early 1930s, the RSS began to spread beyond its Marathi speaking base in the Central Provinces. RSS activities were introduced in Sindh, Punjab and the United Provinces. Much of this growth in north India was due to a growing Hindu fear of Muslim paramilitary movements, particularly the Khaskars. Sikh, Hindu and Muslim paramilitary groups sprang up all over Punjab in the immediate pre World War II period. G.D. Savarkar, a former revolutionary and the older brother of V.D. Savarkar, helped the RSS expand into western Maharashtra. He merged his own Tarun Hindu Sabha as well as the Mukeshwar Dal into the RSS. He accompanied Hedgewar on trips to western Maharashtra, introducing him to Hindu Nationalists. Pune developed into the centre of RSS activities in western Maharashtra.

A womens affiliate, the Rashtra Sevika Samiti, the first RSS affiliate, was started in October 1936 in the Central Provinces by

Mrs. Lakshmi Bai Kelkar, mother of a 'Swayamsevak'. The discipline and organization of this group was parallel to that of the RSS. While there is no formal connection between the two groups, leaders of the Rashtra Sevika Samiti often consult with their RSS counterparts, and they support the other organizations affiliated with the RSS.

Hedgewar maintained close ties with the Hindu Mahasabha leadership, due to his close association with Dr. Munje and Savarkar. Dr. Munje presided over the 1927 Hindu Mahasabha annual session at Ahmedabad, and he invited the RSS to perform drills at the session. This provided opportunity to Hedgewar to establish contacts with Mahasabha leaders throughout India. Prominent members of local Hindu 'Sabhas' would introduce RSS organizers to potential recruits and donors, provide organizers housing and the RSS with a meeting area. This assistance led many members of the Mahasabha including Dr. Munje, to conclude that the RSS would function as the youth wing of the Mahasabha. However, events were to prove them wrong. To emphasize the nonpolitical character of the RSS, Hedgewar refused to sanction RSS support to the Mahasabha's 1938-39 civil disobedience campaign in the princely state of Hyderabad, through individual RSS member took part in it. Savarkar was trying to convert the Hindu Mahasabha into a political party at a time when Hedgewar was seeking in to insulate the RSS from politics. The Hindu Mahasabha established its own paramilitary youth group, the Ram Sena in 1939.

The distancing of relations between the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS after the death of Hedgewar in 1940 was a continuation of a process that had begun three years earlier when Savarkar was elected president of the Hindu Mahasabha. Savarkar attempted to give the organization a more specifically political orientation. Neither Hedgewar nor his successor wanted the RSS to be closely associated with a group whose political activities would place the RSS in direct opposition to the Congress. Savarkar's disdain for Golwalkar, Hedgewar's successor, further soured relations between the two organizations. Both men were apprehensive regarding the other's role in the Hindu unification movement. Savarkar did not appreciate Golwalkar's saintly style and Golwalkar had reservations about Savarkar's unwillingness to compromise. Savarkar's followers, particularly those in Maharashtra, considered him the driving force behind the Hindu unification movement. While many of the RSS members respected Savarkar, they did not consider him the supreme leader of Hindus

#### **14.7.2 RSS after Hedgewar:**

After the death of Hedgewar on 21 June 1940, Golwalkar who was designated by the former a day before his death succeeded

him as the 'sarsanghchalak.' Unlike Hedgewar, Golwalkar came from a relatively prosperous and close-knit family. He had a youthful interest in sports and Music. During his late adolescence, he developed a deep interest in religion and spiritual meditation. Two years after earning his M.Sc. in biology at Banaras Hindu University, he was selected as a lecturer in zoology there. Some of Golwalkar's students encouraged him to attend RSS meetings. Hedgewar met Golwalkar while visiting Banaras in 1931 and was attracted to the ascetic twenty-five year old teacher. In the summer of 1935, shortly after completing his law examination, Golwalkar was asked to manage the RSS Officers' Training Camp, a clear sign of his high standing with Hedgewar. Yet Golwalkar was a reluctant leader. Hedgewar feared that Golwalkar's ascetic temperament could lead him to become a 'sanyasi'. In spite of his apprehensions regarding Golwalkar, Hedgewar recognized the former's leadership qualities and after assigning him various responsibilities in the RSS organization nominated him as his successor.

Golwalkar's saintly style and his apparent disinterest in politics convinced some 'Swayamsevaks' that the - RSS had become more concerned with other-worldly implications. of character building than with its national political implications. Links between the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS were virtually severed, the military department of the RSS was dismantled, the RSS remained aloof from the anti-British agitations during the World War II, and it refused to assist the various militarization and paramilitary schemes advocated by many other Hindu nationalists. Golwalkar, unlike Hedgewar, showed no public interest in the movement to enlist Hindus in the armed forces of British India.

Golwalkar was not a revolutionary in the conventional sense of the term. The British understood this. In an official report on RSS activity, prepared in 1943, the Home Department concluded that, 'it would be difficult to argue that the RSS constitutes an immediate menace to law and order.' Commenting on violence that accompanied the 1942 Quit India Movement, the Bombay Home Department observed, 'the Sangh has scrupulously kept itself within the law, and in particular, has refrained from taking part in the disturbances that broke out in August 1942...'

Golwalkar opposed the effort of some Hindu organizations to encourage the recruitment of Hindus into the military and considered it unpatriotic. He was openly critical of the Hindu Mahasabha for engaging in such recruitment activities. The RSS continued to expand rapidly during the war years in spite of the defection of some members disappointed by its apparent retreat from activism.

The post-war expansion of the RSS in northern India coincided with deteriorating communal relations between Muslims and Hindus. The Muslim League, campaigning for the creation of a separate Muslim state, declared a Direct Action Day on 16 August 1946. Communal violence erupted in Bengal and north-western India. On 3 June 1947 Lord Mountbatten, the British Viceroy, announced his Majesty's Government's decision to partition the subcontinent on communal basis and to terminate colonial rule on 15 August 1947. The partition led to a large scale migration of people from and to Pakistan and India. Violence drove thousands of people, uprooting them from the land of their birth.

It was in this setting of near anarchy that the RSS earned enormous goodwill for itself by assisting Hindu refugees in their flight to India and by providing aid in their readjustment to life in a new country. The growing popularity and activism of the RSS led many to speculate that it was a force to reckon with. During a visit to a 'shakha' in Delhi on 16 September 1947, Mahatma Gandhi pleaded with the 'swayamsevaks' to let the government handle law and order in the increasingly tense capital city. Golwalkar reportedly responded that the RSS was purely defensive, though he could not vouch for the actions of every 'Swayamsevak'. Home Minister, Vallabhbhai Patel solicited Golwalkar's help in an effort to convince the Hindu Maharaja of Kashmir to merge his princely state with India. Golwalkar met the Maharaja in October 1947 and urged him to recruit Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs into his militia. After Indian troops were invited into the state, the Indian military provided arms to volunteers of the RSS as well as to members of Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference. In September 1947 the Delhi region military commander met Golwalkar at least twice to request his help in maintaining law and order.

Thousands of 'swayamsevaks' were recruited to organize rescue squads to provide food and medicine, and to organize temporary residential quarters for the refugees when they arrived in India. The largest single refugee relief operation was in Delhi, where the RSS operated four large camps.

Gandhi was assassinated on Friday evening, 30 January 1948, at 5.30 p.m. by Nathuram Godse. He had previously been a member of the RSS, and at the time of assassination, was an editor of a pro-Hindu Mahasabha newspaper in Pune. Because of his background, the government suspected that the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS had both been involved in a conspiracy to assassinate Gandhi and to seize control of the government. Leaders of both groups were arrested. On 3 February 1948 Golwalkar was arrested and the government banned the RSS the next day. Before his arrest, Golwalkar had instructed the RSS leaders temporarily to cease all RSS activities. In spite of this instruction and the



subsequent ban, a large number of 'swayamsevaks' continued to meet under the guise of study groups, sports associations, devotional assemblies etc. The government was not able to show any RSS involvement in Gandhi's murder its involvement in a conspiracy to overthrow the government. By August 1948 most of the detainees were released and Golwalkar himself was released on 5 August 1948.

### Check Your Progress

Q.6 Describe the formation and policies of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

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#### 14.7.3 RSS Ideology:

As the RSS draws liberally from the Hindu past to construct its belief system, an investigation is necessary of how Hindu thought and practices inform the verbal symbols, signs, and rituals which the RSS employs.

Hedgewar, like all revivalists, believed that the Hindu past possessed the conceptual tools for the reconstruction of the society. Also like other revivalists, he was convinced that only Hindu thought would motivate the population to achieve independence and to reconstruct society. In the early part of the twentieth century, Aurobindo Ghose stated the case in terms that the RSS was later to emphasize.

RSS theoreticians maintain that the social body functions well only when individuals perform their economic, social and religious duties (dharma). The founders of the RSS concluded that the Hindu social body was weak and disorganized because 'dharma' was neither clearly understood nor correctly observed. While the disintegration of Hindu society was perceived as advancing at a rapid pace in the contemporary period, the malady is traced back at least to the Islamic invasions of India when it is alleged creative Hindu thought ceased to inform society about new ways to respond to changing conditions.

A recurrent theme in the RSS belief systems is the identification of hostile forces which plot against the nation and which are responsible for the 'disruptive' strains in the country.

These forces are often identified with particular social groups, who are usually defined as different, united and powerful. RSS writers identify two general types of potentially 'disruptive' forces in contemporary Indian society - (1) Muslims and Christians who propagate values that might result in the denationalization of their adherents and (2) the 'Westernized' elite who propose capitalism, socialism, or communism as solutions for Indian development.

RSS writers allege that Christian values have tended to distance Christians culturally from the national mainstream in some parts of the country. From this proposition, a sub proposition is deduced, because some Christians do not consider themselves culturally Indian, they do not experience a sense of community with Indians. The case against Islam is stated in similar terms. However, Islam is viewed as a more serious problem because of the size of the Muslim community, the history of communal animosity between Hindus and Muslims and existence of Muslim states in the sub-continent.

Democracy, capitalism and socialism, according to RSS writers, are western concepts that have failed to improve the human condition. According to a leading RSS publicist - 'democracy and capitalism join hand to give a free reign to exploitation, socialism replaced capitalism and brought with it an end to democracy and individual freedom' These concepts are considered contrary to the traditional principles of the Hindu thought. The argument is that each of these concepts limits itself to the premise that man is a 'bundle of physical wants'. While not disregarding the notion that 'passion' is natural to man, RSS writers argue that these 'foreign' philosophies stimulate the quest for material gratification which results eventually in greed and class antagonism, attitudes that lead to exploitation, social warfare and anarchy. As an alternative to these socio-economic systems, the RSS offers a social blueprint that minimizes social conflict and functionally links the various social units together into an organic whole.

The transformation of man is of supreme importance for such a change is an important aspect of the RSS belief system. Such a transformation is considered a necessary prerequisite for revitalizing society and for sustaining it. Golwalkar, in his major treatise on the RSS belief system mentions four virtues that characterize the ideal person. The first is 'invincible physical strength', which he interpreted as the calm resolve that is needed for commitment to disciplined activity. The second virtue is 'character', which is a personal resolve to commit oneself to a noble cause. The third virtue is 'intellectual acumen' and lastly, 'fortitude' which permits the honourable person to persevere in a virtuous life. The virtuous life can be summarized by industriousness combined

with a zealous and painstaking adherence to 'dharma'. The RSS belief system proposes that disciplined activity is the sign of a virtuous life. Life is considered a struggle against disorder and anarchy, and it requires organization, calculation and systematic endeavor. Because disorder and anarchy are presumably strengthened by human passion, the individual must diligently tame and discipline his energies.

### Check Your Progress

Q.7 Explain the Ideology of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

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### 14.8 SUMMARY:

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Due to the British rule in India the rise and growth of communalism came into existence and which shaped the political life of the country. This gave birth to certain organizations and began to function for their own people. The British used the Muslim league as a counterpoise to the Indian National Congress in pursuit of their divide and rule policy which ultimately led to the creation of Pakistan. The Hindu Mahasabha was brought into existence to oppose the Muslim orientation of the Congress and finally came in direct conflict with the Muslim league. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was established in 1925 as an educational body for character building of the people and uniting the Hindu Community. It wanted to make independent India a creative society. But before and after independence of the country it surmised that the Hindu-Muslim riots projected the weakness and divisions within the Hindu community.

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### 14.9 QUESTIONS:

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1. Account for the rise and growth of the All India Muslim league.
2. Give an account of the work of Syed Ahmed Khan and Aligarh Movements.
3. Examine the circumstances that led to the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha.
4. Give a brief account of the aims, objectives, ideology and programmes of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh.

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**14.10 ADDITIONAL READINGS:**

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1. Walter Anderson and Shridhar Dambe, Brotherhood in Saffron, R.S.S. and Hindu Revivalism.
2. B.B. Majumdar, Militant Nationalism in India and its Social religious Background 1897-1907.
3. Samkar Ghose, the Renaissance to Militant Nationalism in India.
4. P.N. Chopra (ed), Role of Indian Muslims in the Struggle for freedom, Life and life publication New Delhi, 41979.
5. Jalal ayesha, The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim league and the Demand for Pakistan.



**MODULE - IV****15****TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE****(A) Constitutional Developments 1917 - 1947****UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 15.0 Objectives
- 15.1 Introduction
- 15.2 The Indian Councils Act, 1909 (Minto-Morley Reforms, 1909)
- 15.3 The Government of India Act, 1919 (Montague-Chelmsford Reforms)
- 15.4 The Government of India Act, 1935
- 15.5 Dyarchy at the Centre
- 15.6 The Constitutional Development of India (1939-47)
- 15.7 Summary
- 15.8 Questions
- 15.9 Additional Readings

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**15.0 OBJECTIVES:**

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to

- Understand the historical background of the constitutional development in India.
- Know the main provisions of the Indian Councils Act of 1861.
- Comprehend the Montague's Declaration of August 1917.
- Grasp the Government of India Act, 1919.
- Explain the Government of India Act, 1935.
- Know the Indian Independence Act, 1947.

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**15.1 INTRODUCTION:**

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The Constitutional development in India can be traced to the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, following the Great Revolt of 1857 and the Act for the Good Government of India, 1858. Through

these measures the rule of the East India Company over India was terminated and the Indian administration came under the direct control of the British Government in England. The Act of 1858 authorized the appointment of an additional principal Secretary of State for India in the British Cabinet and created the Council of India. In India, the administration was carried on by the Governor General and his Council at the centre and the Governor and their Councils at the Provincial level.

The Indian Councils Act of 1861 inaugurated the process of decentralization. The Act restored to the Councils of Bombay and Madras the legislative power they had lost earlier in favour of the Central Government, and new Councils with similar powers were allowed to be established in other provinces. Thus, by the Indian Councils Act of 1861, the first step was taken in the direction of legislative decentralization. The Act of 1861 also provided for the appointment of additional members to the Councils, not less than six and more than twelve for two years, of whom not less than half were to be non officials. This was intended to include some Indians in the Governor General's Council. Though such inclusion was not based on the principle of democratic representation, its significance cannot be ignored. Usually Indian Princes, their Diwans or big landlords were nominated to the Council. This was an important step towards constitutional development in India as the principle of Indian representation in the Government was accepted by the Indian Councils Act of 1861.

The Indian Councils Act of 1892 provided for the increase of the membership of the Councils. But there was controversy over the method of selection of members. The conservatives thought that elections at that stage were totally unwise. The Liberals, on the contrary, thought that the principle of election should be introduced. Finally, a compromise formula was worked out by which the Government was obliged to consult, prior to nomination, certain representative bodies or institutions such as Municipalities, District Boards, Universities, Chambers of Commerce, Land-holders etc. These bodies could only make recommendations. It was within the power of the Government, with the approval of the Secretary of State, to accept or reject them. The Act also provided for the enlargement of the functions of the Councils. As a result, in addition to their legislative function, the Councils were empowered to hold discussions on the annual financial statement and also ask questions under prescribed conditions and restrictions.

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## **15.2 THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACT, 1909 (MINTO- MORLEY REFORMS, 1909):**

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The failure of the moderates in the Indian National Congress to achieve any substantial constitutional reforms from the British Government except the meagre Indian Councils Act 1892 strengthened the radical section of the Congress, which assumed a more militant attitude and demanded bolder action against British imperialism. The unpopular measures of Curzon such as the partition of Bengal led to the rise of discontent among the people both Hindus and Muslims. Following the Partition of Bengal in 1905, the militant nationalists adopted stronger methods of agitation such as 'boycott of foreign goods and promotion of Swadeshi and spread of national education. Meanwhile, in 1906, the Muslim League was established with an aim of safeguarding the interests of the Muslims. The differences between the moderates and extremists in the Congress led to the split in the Congress in 1907. Under this political background it is important to trace the circumstances that led to the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909.

The idea of reforms was first broached by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, the Moderate leader. In his budget speech in March, 1906, he made an appeal to the Governor-General Minto to conciliate the educated classes, and pointed out that 'there is but one way in which this conciliation can be secured, and that is by associating these classes more and more with the Government of their country'. This appeal evidently had some effect on the new Viceroy. He thought of appointing an Indian member to his Executive Council. He consulted the prominent members of his Council, but the majority of them were strongly opposed to such step. There the matter ended, but Minto never lost sight of the idea of reforms.

The Secretary of State of India, Morley was also keen on reforms. Gokhale who had been to England had five interviews with Morley between 9 May and 1 August, 1906. Having ensured the Moderates help by his conversation with Gokhale, Morley proceeded, without delay, to fulfill his own part of the agreement. On 15 June, 1906, he wrote to Minto to make a good start in the way of reform in the popular direction. His suggestions for the reforms included - the extension of the native element in the Councils, full time for discussing budgets, right of moving amendments. Minto agreed to the suggestions of Morley.

The official initiative was taken by Lord Minto by appointing a Committee in August 1906 and consisted of four members of his Council. The Committee was asked to consider the whole question of political reforms and Minto wrote a minute for its guidance. In this

minute he stressed the necessity of taking initiative so that 'the Government of India should not be put in the position of appearing to have its hands forced by agitation in this country, or by pressure to have its hands forced by agitation in this country, or by pressure from home'. Lord Minto then referred to the various proposals regarding reforms and the important political interests that needed protection, namely, the hereditary nobility and the landed classes, the trading, professional and agricultural classes, and the planting and commercial European community. The subjects proposed for the Committee's consideration were - (1) a Council of Princes, and should this be impossible, whether they might be represented in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, (2) an Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council, (3) increased representation of Indians on the Legislative Council of the Viceroy and of Local Governments, (4) prolongation of the budget debate, and procedure as to the presentation of the budget and (5) powers of moving amendments.

Even before the Committee had submitted its report, Minto took a momentous step and promised in advance, to grant the Muslims separate electorates and also gave vague hints about other special concessions. As soon as it was known that the reform was in the air and the Viceroy had appointed a Committee to consider, among others, the question of extending the representative element in the Legislative Council, Nawab Moshin-ul-Mulk, who succeeded Syed Ahmed Khan as the leader of the Muslims, took a deputation of 36 members with Aga Khan as the leader to the Viceroy on 1 October 1906. The address presented community. Lord Minto assured the deputation that due care would be taken to safeguard the interest of the Muslim community.

The Committee submitted its report to the Viceroy in October 1906. Lord Minto circulated it with a note of his own to the other members of the Council. The proposals of the Committee were discussed in many a meeting of the Council and by the end of March 1907, the Government of India sent its views to the Secretary of State.

Throughout the next two years, 1907 and 1908, there was an acrimonious discussion regarding the principles of weightage and communal representation which formed the chief planks in the platform of Muslim politics. Morley was not very much impressed by the scheme submitted by the Government of India. In his despatch, dated 27 November 1908, on the Reform proposals of the Government of India, he disapproved of the plan of separate electorates, and the other proposals of the Government of India. However, due to pressure from the Muslim lobby, Minto convinced Morley the need to grant communal representation to the Muslims. The proposals in their final form were sent to the Secretary of State on 1 October 1908. On 23 February 1909, Morley introduced a



short Bill in the House of Lords. After thorough discussion the Bill was adopted by the House of Lords on 11 March 1909 and the House of Commons passed it on 21 May 1909. It received Royal assent and became the Indian Councils Act on 25 May 1909.

The Indian Councils Act of 1909, containing eight clauses, merely laid down the framework of the new Councils, and the details were fixed by Regulations made under that Act. Its main provisions may be summed up as the following-

Clause 1 - The members of the Legislative Councils shall be both nominated and elected, the total maximum number being 60 for the Council of the Governor General, 50 for each of the major provinces - Bombay, Madras, Bengal, U.P., Eastern Bengal and Assam, and 30 for the rest, in addition to the members of the Executive Councils who were ex-officio members of these Legislative Councils.

Clauses 2-3 - The Governor General in Council was authorized to create Executive Councils for the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal and other provinces, the maximum number of the members of Bengal, as well as Bombay and Madras, being fixed at four.

Clause 5 - The Governor General in Council and the Governors and Lieutenant Governors in Council were to make rules authorizing discussion of the budget and any matter of general public interest and the asking of questions by the members of Councils.

Clause 6 - The Governor General was authorized, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, to make regulations, among others, for laying down the procedure for election and nomination of members of all Councils and determine their qualifications.

Clauses 2-3 were rejected in the House of Lords, but were introduced again in a modified form in the House of Commons, which was accepted by the House of Lords.

The underlying purpose of fixing the number of members of the Executive Council as four, as explained by Morley in his Reform Dispatch of 1908, was that 'at least one of these should be an Indian'. But, as he said, this was to be done, not by any statutory provision but by practice and usage.

The Indian Councils Act, 1909 was a real improvement on the Act of 1882 in two respects - first, an increase in the number of members in the Legislative Councils, and, secondly, the adoption of the system of election for the appointment of non-official members.

As to the rest, the character of the new Councils was left to be determined by the regulations.

The composition of the Councils was based on two fundamental principles. First that the Governor General's Legislative Council must have a 'substantial', though not an overwhelming majority of officials. Secondly, such official majority was not necessary for Provincial Legislative Councils, partly because their powers were very limited, and partly because the Head of the Government had the power to withhold assent to any measure passed by the Council.

The procedure of nomination was adopted to give representation to certain interests which were not likely to be properly or adequately represented through election. The Government of India had absolutely free hands in such nominations, and no qualifications were specified in the Regulations made under the Act. Elaborate Rules were, however, laid down for election, by Regulations made under clause 6 of the Act.

The electorates for the Imperial Legislative Council created by the Regulations under the Act of 1909 may be divided into three main classes - (1) General electorates, consisting of the non-official members either of Provincial Legislative Councils or of the Municipal and District Boards, (2) Class Electorates, such as Landholders and Muslims, and (3) Special Electorates, such as Presidency Corporations, universities, Chambers of Commerce, Port Trusts, Planting and Trade interests, etc.

The functions of the Legislative Councils as well as the rights of the members were increased. In the Imperial Legislative Council the members could discuss the budget and suggest alterations. But they could not discuss provisions made for some items like ecclesiastical expenditure, interest on debts etc. Members could also move resolutions and discuss matters of general public interest.

The Indian Councils Act of 1909, though manifested an improvement upon the Act of 1892, it failed to satisfy the aspirations of the people. Firstly, the Councils were not truly representative of the people as a whole. Narrow franchise and indirect elections failed to instill in the members a sense of responsibility to the people.

Secondly, the Councils had no real power in the sphere of legislation and finance. They were reduced to only debating bodies which aired certain criticisms. Thirdly, neither the subordination of the Provincial Governments to the Government of India nor that of the latter to the Secretary of State was relaxed. Finally, the Act had no answer to the demand for responsible government.

The most unfortunate feature of the new Act was the undue importance that it gave to communal interests. The Act favoured the Muslims by granting them separate representation disproportionate to their population. This was done on the excuse of the political importance of the Muslim community.

The Reforms introduced by the Indian Councils Act of 1909, did not satisfy even the Moderates in the Congress. They felt cheated and frustrated. The arbitrary power of disqualification, the narrow franchise, the official majority and centre and the hoax of non official majority in the Provinces, the restrictions on debate and the limited power of influencing the budget disillusioned the Moderates. The Congress as a party disapproved of communal electorates. The majority of the Congressmen lost faith in the Moderates approach. The Extremists felt that the real purpose of the reforms was to divide the nationalist ranks and check the growth of unity among the Indians.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1 Summarize the main provisions of the Morley-Minto reforms. How far did they satisfy the demands of Indian people?

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### 15.3 THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1919: (MONTAGUE-CHELMSFORD REFORMS)

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The disillusionment created by the Indian Councils Act, 1909, in the political atmosphere of India aggravated and reinforced the demand for self-government. The Indian people found that self-government would not descend upon them as a gift of the British. Meanwhile, they had a fairly clear idea of what was meant by self-government. As Gokhale remarked, 'the political philosophy and axioms of the West have become an essential part of Indian life, and when education came to India it brought with it the politics of nationality, liberalism and freedom'.

Events were moving fast both in India and abroad. The resolution for Provincial Autonomy of 1911 and the transfer of capital from Calcutta to Delhi in the same year were significant developments. Indian aspirations for reforms quickened by the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Political theorists became

active in formulating new schemes for India. One of the first was that of Gokhale, which advocated a substantial measure of self-government. Next came, the scheme of Lionel Curtis of the 'Round Table', which advocated 'Dyarchy', a dual government in which political power was shared by British and Indian representatives. Nineteen members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council prepared a scheme, which was subsequently adopted by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League in 1916. Its main features were direct elections to Provincial Councils, the binding character of the Council Resolutions on the Governor, a four-fifth majority of elected members in the Central Legislature, Indianisation of half of the membership in the Executive Council and the election of these members by the elected members of the Legislatures.

The First World War gave great fillip to the national movement in India. The various statements made by British and Allied statesmen raised great expectation in the minds of the people that something was bound to happen in the near future which would raise the status of the country. The Home Rule Movement received great impetus and was spreading widely. It may be added that the revolutionaries also were very active during the war and made attempts to secure arms from enemy countries with a view of raising a revolt and driving the British out of India. But their attempts were foiled by timely action on the part of the watchful Government.

Under these circumstances, Edwin Samuel Montague, the Secretary of State for India made an historic pronouncement in the House of Commons on 20 August 1917. He said, 'The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire'.

Different sections of public opinion in India reacted differently to Montague's declaration of policy. The Moderates hailed it as the Magna Charta of India, while the Nationalists who had been demanding the establishment of self-government in the immediate or near future were not satisfied with the declaration of responsible government as the distant goal of His Majesty's Government to be realized through successive stages. A Resolution passed at the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1917 urged the necessity for the immediate enactment of a Parliamentary Statute providing for the establishment of Responsible Government in India, the full measure to be attained within a time limit to be fixed in the Statute itself at an early date. The resolution demanded the immediate implementation of the Congress-League scheme of reforms.

The Europeans in India strongly denounced the proposal to introduce self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in the country. They thought the step to be hasty and unwise, and in case political advance was thrust upon the people, they demanded separate and adequate representation in the Councils in order to safeguard their interests.

With a view to drawing up a scheme of reforms after ascertaining the views of Indian leaders of different shades of opinion, the officials of the Central and Provincial Governments, and in consultation with the Viceroy, Chelmsford, Montague paid a visit to India. He arrived in November 1917 and stayed on till May 1918. He met top-ranking leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League, and also received deputations of other groups.

Montague drew up his Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms in consultation with the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford. It was published on 8 July 1918, and is popularly known as the Montford Reforms. The Report laid down the following formula - (1) 'There should be, as far as possible, complete popular control in local bodies and the largest possible independence for them of outside control, (2) The Provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps towards the realization of responsible government should be taken. Some measure of responsibility should be given at once, and our aim is to give complete responsibility as soon as conditions permit. This involves at once giving the provinces the largest measure of independence, legislative, administrative and financial, of the Government of India which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities. (3) The Government of India must remain wholly responsible to Parliament, and saving such responsibility, its authority in essential matters must remain undisputable, pending experience of the effect of the changes now to be introduced in the provinces. In the meantime, the Indian Legislative Council should be enlarged and made more representative and its opportunities of influencing Government increased. (4) 'In proportion as the foregoing changes take effect, the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State over the Government of India and the Provincial Governments must be relaxed'.

The chief aspects of the Montford Report can be summed up as follows - popular control over local bodies, partial responsibility or Dyarchy in the Provinces, increased opportunities of influencing the Government in the Centre but without any responsibility, and relaxation of the control of the Secretary of State to the degree demanded by the extent to which power was transferred to the people. The principle of separate communal electorates was retained despite the candid admission of its being anti-democratic and anti-national in character. The authors of the Report found it

impossible to abandon it because of previous commitment to the Muslims and the prevailing conditions in the country. Not only that, they went a step further, and contemplated that it might be extended to the Sikhs.

The publication of the Montford Report on 8 July 1918 had different reactions in different quarters. Tilak characterized it as a sunless dawn. Mrs. Annie Besant held that the political reforms were unworthy of England to give and of India to take. The Moderate leaders, however wholeheartedly endorsed the scheme.

Based on the Montford Report a Bill was introduced in the British Parliament and was passed by both the Houses and received Royal assent in December 1919, and became the Government of India Act, 1919.

The Preamble of the Act of 1919 claims that the Government of India Act of 1919 as a 'substantial' step in the direction of 'progressive realization of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire', of 'the development of self-governing institutions in the Provinces of India' and of giving to the Provinces in provincial matters the highest measure of independence of the Government of India, which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities.

The Provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919, may be summarized as the following - (1) At the Centre a bicameral Legislature - Central Legislative Assembly and the Council of States was to be set up in place of the single Imperial Council. (2) Elections to both the Houses of the Central Legislature were to be direct. Franchise, however, was restricted. Qualifications for the right to vote were prescribed chiefly in terms of the land revenue or income tax that a person paid or a house that he owned. (3) The Central Legislature was given powers to make or amend laws for British India. But these powers were subject to important exceptions. (4) The Act tried to specify the powers of the Centre and the Provinces by providing two lists of subjects. Matters in respect of which uniformity in legislation was desirable or needed like defense, foreign affairs, tariffs and customs, post and telegraph etc. were assigned to the Centre. Matters in which only the concerned Province was interested like education, local self-government, irrigation, water supply, health etc. were to be in the Provincial sphere. (5) The Government of India Act, 1919, introduced Dyarchy in the Provinces. Under this system, the subjects to be dealt by the Provincial Government were divided into two parts. One was called Transferred Subjects and the other was called Reserved Subjects. The Governor in Council was in charge of the Reserved Subjects and the Governor acting with the Ministers, of the Transferred Subjects. The guiding principle of this

division was to include within the Transferred List those departments which afforded most opportunities for local knowledge and social services, those in which Indians had shown themselves to be keenly interested, those in which mistakes that might occur, though serious, would not be irremediable, and those which stood most in need of development. But departments primarily concerned with law and order, land revenue or tenant rights were not to be transferred.

The administration of the Reserved Subjects was entrusted to members of Governor's Executive Council, appointed by the Crown for the period of five years and receiving a fixed pay. They were not responsible to the Provincial Legislature.

The Transferred Subjects were entrusted to Ministers who were to be nominated by the Governor from among the elected members of the Provincial Council and were to hold office during his pleasure. Their salary was to depend on the vote of the Legislature. In practice, the Provinces of Bengal, Bombay and Madras had four Executive Councilors and three Ministers, in Bihar and Orissa, three Executive Councilors and two Ministers and in the remaining Provinces two Councilors and two Ministers were appointed.

The Governor's role as the link between the two halves of the Executive was not only pivotal but also complex. He was to lead the two wings of the Government which were operating in two distinctly separate fields and responsible to two masters. As such he was obliged not only to yoke the Councilors and Ministers to the chariot of Provincial Administration but also to drive it.

In its operation Dyarchy proved to be a failure. An official committee headed by Sir Alexander Muddiman made a thorough examination of the working of Dyarchy in the Provinces and came to the conclusion that it had failed.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.2 Write a note on the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.

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**15.4 THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1935:**

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In order to review the working of the Government of India Act, 1919 and to make recommendation for further reforms, the British Government appointed the Simon Commission in 1927. As a result of the Report of the Commission the British Government summoned the Round Table Conferences at London. For the first time the British Government invited Indian leaders to participate in the discussions for finding a solution to India's political problem. In all three Round Table Conferences were held. Gandhi, who was then carrying on the civil disobedience movement, did not attend the first conference. Though he attended the Second Round Table Conference following the Gandhi Irwin Pact (1931), he returned disappointed.

The final proposals of the British Government for constitutional reforms for India were embodied in the White Paper Proposals of 1933 consisting of 202 paragraphs. It contained three major principles forming the basis of the proposed constitutional set up in India, namely, federation, provincial autonomy and special responsibilities and safeguards vested in the Executive, both at the Centre and the Provinces. The White Paper Proposals provoked great controversy and satisfied none. The result was the appointment of the Joint Select Committee under the chairmanship of Marquess of Linlithgow. After eighteen months of deliberations the Committee produced a majority report in November 1934.

On the basis of the Report of the Joint Select Committee, a Bill was introduced in the British Parliament. With a few official amendments it was passed by both Houses and received Royal assent on 2 August 1935 and became the famous Government of India Act, 1935. It is a document which runs into 451 clauses and 15 schedules. It was the longest and the most complicated document ever introduced in the British Parliament.

**Check Your Progress**

Q.3 What are the main provisions of the Government of India Act, of 1935?

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#### **15.4.1 Provincial Autonomy**

One of the redeeming features of the Government of India Act, 1935 was that it marked the beginning of the Provincial autonomy. It was definitely an advance on the Act of 1919. The Provinces for the first time got a measure of democratic government the system of Dyarchy was done away with. All subjects were transferred to the charge of Ministers. The hold of the Centre over the Provincial subjects was also considerably reduced. This, however, does not mean that the Act of 1935 established a full-fledged responsible government in the Provinces. The Ministers were not absolutely free in matters of running their departments. The Governors continued to possess a set of overriding powers, although such powers were not exercised very often.

#### **15.4.2 All India Federation**

The Government of India Act, 1935, provided for an All India Federation comprising of the British Indian Provinces and the Indian States which agreed to join it. The constituent units of the Federation were 11 Provinces, 6 Chief Commissioners Provinces and all those states which agreed to join it. The States were absolutely free to join the Federation or not. At the time of joining it the ruler of that State was required to sign an Instrument of Accession, mentioning therein the extent to which it consented to surrender its authority to the Federal Government. The ruler was, however, authorized to extend the scope of Federal authority in respect of his State by executing another instrument. Every unit enjoyed full autonomy in its internal affairs. The Act also provided for the setting up of a Federal Court to settle disputes between the Federal Government and the units.

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### **15.5 DYARCHY AT THE CENTRE:**

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The Government of India Act, 1935 abolished Dyarchy at the Provincial level and introduced it at the Centre. The Federal subjects were divided into two categories - The Reserved and Transferred. The Reserved List included defense, external affairs, ecclesiastical affairs and tribal areas. These were to be administered by the Governor General with the help of three Councillors to be appointed by him.

For the administration of the Transferred subjects, the Governor General was to appoint a Council of Ministers whose number could not exceed ten. The Ministry was to consist of the persons who commanded the confidence of the Legislature. By a subsidiary instrument of instructions the Governor General was also empowered to include in his ministry the representatives of the Indian States as well as the 161 minority communities. The Ministry was collectively responsible to the Federal Legislature. The

Governor General remained overall in charge of both the Reserved and the Transferred subjects. He was also responsible for the co-ordination of work between the two wings and for encouraging joint deliberations between the Councillors and the Ministers.

### 15.5.1 Division of Subjects

Under the Government of India Act, 1935, the subjects for administrative purpose were divided into three Lists - (1) The Federal List, (2) The Provincial List and (3) The Concurrent List. The Federal List included 59 subjects, the Provincial List 54 and the Concurrent List 36. The subjects which were of all India interest and demanded uniform treatment were put under the Federal List. These subjects were armed forces, currency and coinage, posts and telegraph, railways, central services, external affairs, wireless, customs etc. Only the Federal Legislature could make laws on the Federal Subjects.

Subjects mainly of local interest were placed in the Provincial List and were entirely within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Legislature for the purpose of legislation. These subjects were public order, education, local self government, public health, land revenue, forests, mining and fisheries and others.

The third list known as the Concurrent List included subjects which were primarily of the Provincial interest but at the same time required uniformity of treatment all over the country. Hence the Act authorized both the Federal and Provincial legislatures to pass laws on those subjects. In the event of conflict the Federal law was to prevail.

Prof. Coupland described the Government of India Act, 1935 as a great achievement of constructive political thought'. In his opinion 'it made possible the transference of Indian destiny from British to Indian hands'.

### Check Your Progress

Q.4 What do you understand by Dyarchy? What were its main defects ?

Q.5 Describe the Provincial Autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935.

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## **15.6 THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA (1939-47):**

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In December 1939 when the Second World War broke out with the participation of Japan and her invasion on the Eastern parts of Asia, the position of the British became quite weak. The British declared that after the end of the World War they would establish a Colonial Empire in India and thus they tried to satisfy the Indians but they did not succeed and the Swaraj Movement went on gaining in strength with the passage of time. In the beginning the British could not achieve success in the war, so they sent Cripps Mission to India in 1942, which failed. After this, they tried to crush the unity of India through Cabinet Mission and Mountbatten's plan of the partition of India. After the acceptance of the partition of India by the Muslim League, riots broke out in different parts of the country. On 20<sup>th</sup> February 1947 the British Prime Minister declared that by June 1948 they would leave India by all means and in the meantime the British drew up the Indian Independence Act of 1947, which was the last significant effort towards the Constitutional Development of India. Dr. Subhash Kashyap had pointed out to the provisions of this Act as follows.

### **15.6.1 Main Provisions of the Indian Independence Act of 1947**

1. On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 after the partition of India two independent kingdoms, such as, India and Pakistan would be established.
2. In the territory of India all the provinces of British India would be included excepting the territory, which would be included in Pakistan.
3. Eastern Bengal, Western Punjab, Sindh and North-West Frontier Province would be included in Pakistan.
4. Both the nations would decide of their own accord if they had to accept the membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations or not.
5. The British Crown would appoint separate Governor-Generals in both the states but in case both of them wanted to share one Viceroy with their mutual consent, they could be permitted.
6. The supremacy of the Crown would come to an end vis-a-vis the native rulers and all the treaties and pacts so far made between the Crown and the native rulers would be treated as nullified.
7. The title of Emperor of India awarded to the British Crown would be abolished and the post of the Secretary of State for India would also come to an end.

8. Before the framing of new Constitutions, the administration would be run under the Act of 1935.
9. The native rulers would have the choice to accede to any state according to their own choice.

Thus the second phase of the Constitutional Development of India also came to an end on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 at midnight and India became free.

The third phase of the Constitutional Development of India began with the framing of a Democratic Constitution. So it is evident that the framing of Constitution in India was not a casual event as it developed step by step in which the contemporary circumstances played a prominent part.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.6 Discuss the main provisions of the Indian Independence Act, 1947.

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### **15.7 SUMMERY:**

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The constitutional development of India began with the passage of various acts by the British for administration of the country. Among such Acts the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, the Indian Council's Act of 1862, the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909, the Montague-Chemsford Reforms of 1919, The Government of India Act of 1935 and the Indian Independence Act of 1947 are important. Among these acts the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935 helped The British to administer the country. These acts brought some new systems in the administration, as Provincial Autonomy, creation of All India Federation, Dyarchy at the Centre and Division of subjects between the State and Central Government. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 brought to an end to the constitutional development under the British rule.

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**15.8 QUESTIONS:**

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1. Examine the circumstances that Led to the Montague's Declaration of 1917.
2. Analyse the important provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919.
3. Asses the major provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.
4. Give an account of the Indian independent Act of 1947.

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**15.9 ADDITIONAL READINGS:**

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B.D.Mishra, Constitutional Development of India.  
S.R. Mehrotra, Towards India's Freedom and Partition.  
Sumit Sarkar, Modern India.  
Tarachand, History of the Freedom Movement in India.  
Vols. 1-4.



## TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

### B1) Indian National Army and Naval Mutiny of 1946

#### UNIT STRUCTURE

- 16.0 Objectives
- 16.1 Introduction
- 16.2 Indian National Army - Circumstances that led to the Establishment of the I.N.A
  - 16.2.1 Leadership of Subhash Chandra Bose
  - 16.2.2 The Imphal Campaign
  - 16.2.3 Causes of the failure of the I.N.A
- 16.3 Naval Mutiny – 1946
  - 16.3.1 Causes of the Naval Revolt
  - 16.3.2 HMIS Talwar
  - 16.3.3 Outbreak of the Revolt
  - 16.3.4 Consequences of the Naval Mutiny
- 16.4 Summery
- 16.5 Questions
- 16.6 Additional Readings

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#### 16.0 OBJECTIVES:

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to

- Understand the circumstances that led to the establishment of the INA.
- Explain the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose.
- Grasp the achievement of the INA.
- Understand the causes of the failure of the INA.
- Grasp the causes of the Navel Revolt.
- Comprehend the consequences of the Navel mutiny.

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#### 16.1 INTRODUCTION:

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The history of the Indian National Army (INA) is the story of a revolutionary war, set inside a major war between two power blocs.

During the Second World War, the INA was raised in the South East Asia, mainly among the Indian soldiers and officers who had surrendered to the Japanese army. Like other revolutionary wars, it aimed at capturing political power from the established authorities, i.e., the British colonial government in India. In all countries of South East Asia, which had come under the Japanese, a civilian organization, Indian Independence League (IIL) was formed to back up the Indian National Army. The INA needed the support of the Indian community, particularly in the form of men and money. Thus, the complex pattern of the INA was molded as much by the Indian nationalist forces in the East and South East Asia as by some external forces, such as the policy of Japan and the overall condition of the Second World War.

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## **16.2 INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY - CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE I.N.A**

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Prior to the establishment of the INA a number of prominent Indian nationalists in the Far East and the South East Asia took initiative in organizing the Indians in those regions for India's independence after the outbreak of the Pacific War. Among these leaders Rash Behari Bose was prominent. He was an extremist and believed in the complete freedom for India. Like other revolutionaries Rash Behari Bose believed in violent methods in the achievement of India's freedom. During the First World War, he visited Shanghai and established contact with the German Consul General with whose aid he negotiated the delivery of a shipment of arms and ammunitions to Indian revolutionaries. Although he was unsuccessful in his mission, his anti-British activities landed him in Japan as a political refugee. While in Japan he gained the friendship of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, father of Chinese Republic who was then a refugee in Japan. Dr. Sun Yat Sen introduced Bose to Mitsuru Toyama, the chief of a powerful Japanese secret society who protected and helped Rash Behari Bose in Japan.

During his stay in Japan, Rash Behari Bose's efforts consisted of acquainting the people of Japan with the Indian problems. He also believed in mobilizing Japanese help for India's freedom in case of a war between Japan and England.

On the eve of the outbreak of the Pacific War, there were a number of Indian organizations in Thailand, both religious and educational in nature. The most active among these groups was Giani Pritam Singh, a Sikh missionary who was in Thailand since 1933. Baba Amar Singh, an elderly Sikh revolutionary who was imprisoned during the First World War, on his release from the jail

joined Pritam Singh in Thailand in 1940. Both of them organized a secret organization known as the Independent League of India.

Till the outbreak of the Pacific War, Pritam Singh's followers continued to work as a secret group. On the eve of the Pacific War, this group came in closer touch with a Japanese intelligence group.

In the midnight of 7-8 December 1941, the Japanese navy approached the shores of Thailand and northeast Malaya and took the enemy forces by surprise. Pritam Singh had already assumed certain responsibility on behalf of the Independent League of India in his agreement with the Japanese. But the League was yet to be formally established. The landing of the Japanese forces in Thailand provided the first opportunity for its inauguration. In a meeting held on 9 December 1941, Mohan Singh later stated that before the fall of Singapore to the Japanese, ten thousand India POWs had been placed under his control by the Japanese. In addition to that forty five thousand Indian soldiers came under his control after the fall of Singapore.

It was at the meeting of Farrar Park at Singapore that Mohan Singh for the first time expressed his intention of raising the Indian National Army to all the Indian POWs. Mohan Singh's proposal had immediate impact on the ordinary soldiers. Mohan Singh's proposal brought them a sense of relief from their anxiety about the probable cruel treatment from their victorious enemy. According to some reliable sources, Mohan Singh's proposal about raising the INA was received by the rank and file at the Indian army with spontaneous display of enthusiasm.

With the declaration of war by Japan on 8 December 1941, Rash Behari Bose and his group in Tokyo lost more time in organizing themselves to make use of the opportunity thrown up by the Pacific War for the purpose of achieving India's independence. On 16 February 1942, after the surrender of Singapore, Prime Minister Tojo, in a speech in the Imperial Diet, called the Indians to make use of the Greater East Asia War for the achievement of India's freedom. The Indians were greatly encouraged by Tojo's promise of support. Immediately, Rash Behari Bose established the headquarters of the Indian independence League at Sanno Hotel in Tokyo. He published a 'manifesto' expressing his intention to start a movement in East Asia for India's independence. He also took initiative to call a conference of the representatives of the Indian communities in the Japanese occupied countries of East Asia. It would be an occasion to agree upon a common plan of action and a central leadership which would guide the Indian independence movement in East Asia.



In March 1942 the leaders of the Indian communities of Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan and those of the Indian POWs met at Tokyo to have a preliminary discussion on, starting an Indian independence movement in East Asia. At the Tokyo Conference there was move to select Rash Behari Bose as the leader of the Indian independence movement in East Asia. However, this move was bound to create misunderstanding among the civil and military leaders from Malaya and Singapore. After a lot of deliberation the conference laid down the pattern of the ~ constitution of the Indian Independence League of East Asia and the political organization in which all the existing Indian nationalist bodies in East Asia would merge and which would set up new branches. An elected body, the Council of Action, was provided with representation from the civilian Indian communities and the army to be raised. With complete control over the army, the Council of Action would be the supreme executive body of the IIL. Rash Behari Bose who was to be the President of the Council should share authority with other members of the Council. The Tokyo Conference formally expressed its support for Japan's East Asia policy and recorded its appreciation of her sympathetic attitude towards India.

The decision to hold a, fully representative conference had been taken at the Tokyo Conference. The representatives of the Indian communities in East and South East Asia and those of the POWs met at Bangkok from 15 to 23 June 1942. The messages from General Tojo and Foreign Minister of Japan and the Prime Minister of Thailand were read out. The representatives of the German and Italian Governments spoke encouraging words. Indian delegates made speeches full of patriotism and they passed thirty-five resolutions regarding their movement. At the Bangkok Conference the various Indian organizations in East Asia advocating the independence of Indian were formally merged into one body called the Indian Independence League (IIL) of East Asia. The framework of the constitution of the League evolved in Tokyo Conference was developed into a full democratic constitution and approved.

The Bangkok Conference decided to raise the national army without delay. After his return from the Tokyo Conference, Mohan Singh had taken up the work of raising the army in right earnest. Moreover, the Bangkok Conference met against the background of popular unrest in India which culminated in the August 1942 revolt. The Bangkok Conference resolved that the IIL would immediately proceed to raise an army called the Indian National Army from among the Indian soldiers and such civilians as may hereafter be recruited. The army to be raised should be under the full control of the Indians and it should be given the powers and status of a free

National Army of an Independent India, and placed' on a footing of equality with the armies of Japan.

In April 1942, after his return from Tokyo, Mohan Singh took up the work of organization of the army in all earnestness. He first organized the INA Headquarters. He called a meeting of the senior Indian officers to whom he submitted his proposal to proceed with the organization of the INA. The officers participating in this conference agreed that the army to be raised would fight for the independence of India and it would go into action 'on the invitation of the Indian National Congress and the people of India.' Until then, the officers pointed out, they would endeavour to make themselves 'better and patriotic Indians'. Of the 40,000 volunteers who agreed to join the army the overwhelming majority consisted of the ranks. According to a reliable source, about 400 Indian officers joined the INA. of whom about 250 were the officers from Indian Medical Service.

The news of the Quit India Movement hastened the formation of the INA and infused inspiration in the movement of the Indians in the South East Asia for the independence of their motherland. Preliminary steps had been taken for the movement of the INA towards the Indian front and an advance party had reached Rangoon. Forward posts were formed near the Indian frontier in Akyab and Imphal areas. Though everything went well, some disconcerting events took place during the month of December 1942. On 8 December, Colonel Gill, the right hand man of Mohan Singh was arrested by the Japanese. On the same day, three members of the Council of Action resigned. Towards the end of the month, Mohan Singh himself was removed from his command, and the army dissolved. The INA sources tried to explain away the crisis as a conflict between Japanese imperialism and the patriotism of the Indians.

There were a number of irritants between the INA and the Japanese. Mohan Singh was not happy about the treatment that the Indian POWs had received from the Japanese army. Colonel Gill who was in charge of the INA in Burma had hurried back to Singapore and reported to Mohan Singh about the ill-treatment given to the INA by the Japanese. Gill had also gathered from his conversation with the Japanese Staff officers in Burma that they intended to place the INA under their direct command when it would arrive in Burma. These reports created great misgivings in Mohan Singh's mind about the sincerity of the Japanese army.

There were some genuine obstacles to the development of a good understanding between the civilian Indian leaders in East Asia and the Japanese liaison agency. The lack of any real interest on the part of the Imperial General Headquarters (IGHQ) in Indian

freedom was perhaps the major one.' If the negative attitude of the Japanese Government created suspicion among the Indian leaders, the tactlessness of the Junior Officers of the Japanese army provoked widespread hostility. On the morning of 8 December the Japanese Military Police informed Mohan Singh of their alleged charges of espionage against Gill and took him under their custody. The differences between Mohan Singh and the President of the Council of Action, Rash Behari Bose precipitated further crisis. Mohan Singh upheld his supreme control of the INA. With their resignation from the Council of Action, Mohan Singh and the other two members, Menon and Gilani had declared that they had severed their 'connection with this movement' in East Asia for India's independence. Mohan Singh considered that the Council of Action has been dissolved with the resignation of the three members and that the GOC was free from its control. In a letter to the President of Action Committee Mohan Singh claimed that the members of the INA were pledged to him and him alone by name. By breaking away from the Indian movement in East Asia and by claiming the loyalty of the INA personally to himself, Mohan Singh had sought to create a position which in the eyes of Rash Behari Bose was untenable. As the GOC refused to abide by the conditions lay down Mohan Singh was dismissed from his command on the express orders of Rash Behari Bose. Immediately after his removal from the INA command, Mohan Singh was taken into custody by the Japanese military police. As a reaction to his dismissal Mohan Singh declared the dissolution of the INA.

Mohan Singh's order for the dissolution of the INA has an immediate unsettling effect on it. The troops were disarmed and all activities in INA ceased. A feeling of despair prevailed among the rank and file. Rash Behari Bose, however, did not accept Mohan Singh's order as valid and did his best to bring the situation under control. He appointed a Committee of Administration consisting of high ranking officers to reinfuse discipline among the INA personnel.

From the beginning of February 1943, things started changing for the better. Prime Minister Tojo, in a reply to an interpellation in the House of Representatives of Japan on 4 February 1943, reiterated that Japan had no territorial ambitions in India and on the contrary she -would give all out assistance to see India free.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.1 What were the circumstances that led to the establishment of the Indian National Army?

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### 16.2.1 Leadership of Subhash Chandra Bose

Rash Behari Bose lost no time in engaging himself in the task of reorganizing the INA. The independence of the army command was taken away and it was decided that a military department would be established within the League. This department was to deal with the matters concerning the military administration and operations.

In February 1943, Colonel Iwakuro, the head of the Liaison Agency, also known as 'Iwakuro Kikan' (Iwakuro Department) called a meeting of about 300 officers of the INA at Bidadari Camp in Singapore and spoke to them about the advisability of joining the army. However, there was no favourable response from them. Later on following a 'heart to heart talk' with some officers it emerged that a large number of officers and men would be willing to continue in the INA on the express condition that Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose would be coming to Singapore and until the time of his arrival no troops should be moved out of the island. It was also made clear that the army should be strictly voluntary one. Iwakuro agreed to these conditions and assured the officers that he would make efforts to make Subhash Chandra Bose's leadership available in East Asia.

The name of Subhash Chandra Bose and the promise of his coming had been with the Indians in East Asia from the beginning of the movement. Mohan Singh had mentioned his name to Fujiwara as early as 1941. In the Singapore Conference and the Tokyo Conference (1942) the need of his guidance had been emphasized by the delegates. The Bangkok Conference had invited him to East Asia. But the necessity of his presence in East Asia was felt early in 1943 more keenly than ever. Rash Behari Bose might have realized that he had failed to secure a declaration about India from the Government of Japan and Subhash Chandra Bose might succeed where he had failed. Thus, when the Japanese liaison officer, Iwakuro met Rash Behari Bose with the proposal of inviting Subhash Chandra Bose to lead the movement in East Asia it was readily accepted.

The question of Subhash Chandra Bose being entrusted with the leadership of the movement having been settled, measures were taken to put the army in order. The new Military Department consisting of five sections was set up with Lt. Col. Bhonsle as Director and seven other officers. Having set up the army in order, Rash Behari Bose tightened his control over the League. The heads of the various departments of the League headquarters prepared a draft constitution of the League. At the Conference of the Indian Representatives of East Asia at Singapore that was held between 27 and 30 April 1943, the Subject Committee, nominated by the President, agreed on a constitution of the Indian

Independence League which made the President the all-powerful leader having complete control over the League and the army.

The new constitution was Rash Behari Bose's great contribution to Indian independence movement in East Asia. He clearly visualized the necessity of an effective leadership in a revolutionary movement. By putting an end to the civil-military conflict for leadership, he helped the emergence of a powerful leadership required to lead a revolutionary movement. During the conference it became fairly certain that Subhash Chandra Bose would soon be in East Asia. Col. Yamamoto, who was the Japanese Military Attache in Berlin and close friend of Subhash Chandra Bose, had participated in the final session of the conference as the new chief of the Japanese liaison agency. Before the close of the session, Rash Behari Bose announced that 'Subhash Chandra Bose, who is expected shortly in this part of the world, will be his next successor.'

Subhash Chandra Bose who had developed differences with Gandhi regarding the methods to be adopted to liberate the country from the British, dramatically escaped from the British surveillance at Calcutta in 1941 and reached Germany through Afghanistan and Russia. Arriving in Germany in March 1941 he called on Hitler and secured his support for raising an Indian National Army. Bose also founded Free India Centres in Rome and Paris. But further activities in Germany suddenly stopped when Bose learnt about the phenomenal success of the Japanese against the British in South East Asia culminating in the fall of Singapore. He instinctively felt that the Far East would provide a more advantageous base to fight against the British, and his presence was required there.

Subhash Chandra Bose accepted the invitation of the Bangkok Conference and on 8 February 1943 left Kiel in a German submarine. The submarine made a wide detour in the Atlantic to avoid British ships and met the Japanese submarine 129, which by a previous arrangement, was waiting at a place 400 miles from Madagascar. Subhash Chandra Bose reached Saban Island on 6 May 1943. He reached Tokyo by a Japanese plane on 16 May 1943. For about a month his presence in Tokyo was kept secret and it was not until 18 June 1943 that the Tokyo Radio announced that 'Chandra Bose the leader of the Indian Independence League who had been in Germany recently, arrived in Tokyo.'

On his arrival at Tokyo, Bose wanted to contact the Japanese leaders. He met Lt. Gen. Arisue, the chief of the Second Bureau which had arranged his trip to East Asia. He also met Field Marshal Sugiyama, the Chief of the General Staff, and expressed his strong desire to lead an army to India. Because of the efforts of Col. Yamamoto, Bose had his first brief meeting with Gen. Tojo on 10

June 1943. Another meeting was arranged four days later. In the second meeting with Tojo, Bose conveyed his plans regarding Indian Independence movement in East Asia and a military campaign against the British in India. Gen. Tojo assured full Japanese cooperation to Bose and reaffirmed Japan's resolve to 'exhaust all means in order to help to expel and eliminate from India, the Anglo-Saxon influence which are the enemy of the Indian people and enable India to attain full independence in the true sense of the term'. Having assured of the goodwill of the Japanese Government, Bose put forward his plea for setting up a Provisional Government to some Japanese officials. The suggestion was accepted in principle.

Armed with the assurance of the Japanese Government for the cause of India's liberation, Bose reached Singapore on 2 July 1943 and on 4 July he took over the Presidentship of the IIL from Rash Behari Bose. Subhash Chandra Bose also assumed the supreme, command of the INA. During the first few weeks after his arrival at Singapore, Bose mainly devoted his attention to set up the League on a war- footing in order to strengthen the civilian base of the army. Simultaneously, matters directly relating to the army also received his attention. On 5 July 1943, he formally reviewed the army and announced its existence to the world. He gave the army its battle-cry, 'Chalo Delhi (On To Delhi)', and a sense of dignity. The honour of the army went high when on 6 July 1943 Gen. Tojo, who was visiting Singapore, received a guard of honour from the INA. The greatest inspiration of the INA was the leadership provided by Subhash Chandra Bose. His personality proved to be a decisive factor in influencing many INA officers. His authority, singleness of mind, personal enthusiasm, straight and bold deductions from the study of international politics or any situation, were the attributes which were bound to attract a soldier's mind.

Simultaneously with the efforts of raising the morale of the volunteers, measures were taken for the expansion of the army. Although Subhash Chandra Bose had put forward a grand scheme of an army of three million in his plan of total mobilization, the immediate target was set at fifty thousand. Bose wanted to fill up major part of the target from the Indian Prisoners of War and the rest of it would come from the civilian volunteers. In accordance with Bose's agreement with Count Terauchi about giving the INA a trial role in the Imp Hal campaign, a new guerilla regiment was raised at Taiping under the command of Lt. Col. Shah Nawaz Khan.

The reorganization of the IIL having been completed and the preparations for reforming the army having been started, the next important step in Bose's programme was the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India. This had to be done before the army could go into action. The support of the Indian community

had been mobilized for it during the months from July and October. Finally, with the approval of the Japanese Government Subhash Chandra Bose proclaimed the setting up of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) on 21 October 1943 with its seat at Singapore. The structure of the Provisional Government was very simple. It comprised of five ministers with Subhash Chandra Bose as the Head of the State, Prime Minister and Minister of War and Foreign Affairs, eight representatives of the INA and eight civilian advisors representing the Indian community of East Asia. The Provisional Government was recognized by the Axis Powers and their Allies. The first decision of importance which the Provisional Government took was its declaration of war on Britain and America, which was decided in the night of 22-23 October, 1943.

Since the creation of Women's Department in the IIL, the response from the women's section of the Indian community to the call for taking active role in the movement was encouraging. By November, there were offers of enlistment for active service from about one hundred women in Singapore. Bose's response to this was the decision to raise a regiment, named after Rani of Jhansi. Although the regiment's primary duty would be to nurse the wounded INA troops in forward areas, its name 'the Rani of Jhansi Regiment', the picture of women carrying arms or engaged in bayonet-charge would have immense propaganda impact. Lakshmi Menon (Sehgal) headed the Rani Jhansi Regiment.

On 25 October 1943, Subhash Chandra Bose left Singapore for Tokyo. On his arrival at Tokyo he was invited to attend the Assembly of the Greater East Asian Nations on 5 and 6 November 1943. However, Bose attended the conference as an observer as he did not want to commit India to the Co-Prosperity Sphere without ascertaining the wishes of all Indians. Tojo's declaration in the Japanese Diet on 27 October of the unstinted support to the Provisional Government reassured Bose of the former's sympathetic attitude. Bose met Tojo, Sugiyama and other officers of the Navy Department and discussed with them various problems relating to the increase of the strength of the INA, financial help of the Japanese Government, the military campaign in India and the transfer of the Indian territories which were already under Japanese occupation to the Provisional Government. In his discussion with Bose on 1 November 1943, Tojo agreed to hand over the administration of the evacuee Indian property in Burma to the Provisional Government. Tojo also agreed to transfer the Islands of Andaman and Nicobar to the Provisional Government and on 13 November 1943, the decision to transfer these islands to Bose was conveyed. Bose immediately renamed the islands as 'Shahid' (martyr) and 'Swaraj' (Independence) and announced, in a press conference in Tokyo that 'for Indians the return of the Andamans

represents the first territory to be liberated from the British yoke. By the acquisition of this territory, the Provisional Government has now become national entity in fact as well as in name.'

### Check Your Progress

Q.2 Discuss the work of Subhash Chandra Bose as the leader of the Indian National Army.

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### 16.2.2 The Imphal Campaign

The plan of the Imphal campaign, in the initial stage of its development, was a purely military one. But the plan had developed during the period from July 1943 to January 1944, when the Indian freedom movement in East Asia was gaining increased momentum. The propaganda carried out by the Provisional Government on nationalist lines had stressed the political implication on any military campaign directed towards India. Bose had persuaded the Japanese army authorities to permit one INA regiment to take part in the Imphal campaign.

For the INA, the importance of the Imphal campaign was that it was the only battle in which it participated with the object of achieving freedom for India. On 7 January 1944 Bose transferred the essential departments of the Provisional Government to Rangoon. The No. 1 Regiment of the INA moved into Burma from north Malaya in early January 1944, and the headquarters of the INA Supreme Command was set up in Rangoon on the 25 of the same month.

The main Japanese operation, directed against Imphal and Kohima, was to start one month after the commencement of the Arakan campaign. Three times larger than the Arakan operation, this main campaign was to be carried out by the three Japanese Divisions. Two INA Battalions and two Bahadur units were to join the Japanese forces from the beginning of the campaign. According to the Japanese plan, the main force consisting of 33 Japanese Division was to strike first and advance from the line connecting Kalembo. The 33 Division was to commence the campaign on 8 March 1944.



Between February and May 1944, the INA had crossed into Indian soil in the Arakan sector and Bishenpur in the Imphal sector. The initial success in the Arakan sector caused much enthusiasm. In a Special Order of the Day issued on 9 February 1944, Subhash Chandra Bose referred to the 'glorious and brilliant actions of the brave forces of the Azad Hind Fauz'. On 21 March 1944 Bose issued a proclamation urging the Indian people to cooperate with the INA and its allied forces. About a week later made citations and gave awards to thirteen members of the INA who had fought in the Arakan and held a National Liberation Week from 6 to 13 April.

The opening of the campaign made it necessary to gear up the drive for new recruits and funds. The reports of initial success created a better response in the Indian community. Organizational changes were made in the Provisional Government to set up total mobilization. The 'Netaji Fund Committee' which was set up in January 1944 was brought under the newly created Revenue Ministry. A new Ministry of Man Power was created to coordinate recruitment and training.

Although these expansions in the Provisional Government strengthened the administrative position of the movement. Bose had little knowledge or control over the utter break-down of the administration under which the INA was working on the front. In May the Commander of the Burma Area Army, Lt. Gen. Kawabe inspected the forward positions of Japanese-INA troops on the front. The tour left no doubt in Kawabe's mind that the Imphal Campaign had failed. On his return from the front he called on Bose's headquarters and discussed in general the difficult conditions under which the Japanese and the INA were fighting. Bose immediately offered to meet the pressing needs of the front line by sending the remaining INA forces, including the women regiment. However, Bose did not know little of the impending disaster, nor did Kawabe like to tell him the bitter truth. From May, Bose was almost cut off from the front. It was not before 5 July 1944 that the Burma Area Army announced the order to abandon the campaign and Bose knew of it.

The failure of the Imphal campaign was very significant event for the INA. It brought to an end the plan of Subhash Chandra Bose for liberating India. He had pinned his hope to an anti-British revolt in India with the appearance of the liberation army on India's eastern border. Knowing well that the tide of the war had turned against the Axis Powers in Europe and in the Pacific, Subhash Chandra Bose looked forward for a victory at Imphal to enable him to put his army into India. Setting up the Provisional Government at Imphal, followed by an advance across the Brahmaputra, would have brought the INA very close to Bengal, Bose's home province, where his political influence was profound.

### Check Your Progress

Q.3 Give an account of the Imphal Campaign.

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#### 16.2.3 Causes of the failure of the INA

The INA took part in the Imphal campaign which was predominantly a campaign of the Japanese army. The failure of the Japanese army at Imphal ruled out all possibilities of success for the INA. The Japanese plan of the Imphal campaign was based on three fundamental weaknesses, namely, inadequate administrative facilities, insufficient air and infantry strength.

The Imphal campaign was ill-timed. The general war position by 1944 had turned against the Axis Powers. Germany was faced with a war situation beyond her control, Italy had capitulated on 3 September 1943 and Japan was hard-pressed in the Pacific. Besides, in the Indo-Burma frontier the military position had changed to the disadvantage of the Japanese army.

One of the important factors, which should be taken into consideration in reviewing INA's performance in the battlefield, is its actual strength. The total strength of INA formations and units which took part in the Arakan, Imphal and Kohima operations in 1944 was about eight thousand in comparison to about eighty seven thousand Japanese combatants and 155 thousand Allied troops.

The No.1 Division of the INA lacked properly trained officers and adequate arms and ammunitions. The battalion commanders and those above, mostly from the officers' ranks of the Indian army, were able officers. But the platoon and company commanders most of whom had been promoted from the ranks during 1942, had no adequate training. The arms and equipments of the Division were old, inadequate and irreplaceable and ammunitions were insufficient.

In the month of April the Commander of the No. 1 Regiment had reported to Bose that due to complete breakdown of the transport system the reserved rations could not be supplied to the front-line units. By May conditions deteriorated further. With the approach of monsoon the situation became worst. The troops of No. 1 Regiment at Kalewa suffered from malaria and about seventy per cent of them were hospitalized.

Bose came to realize the wider pattern of the Imphal disaster in September 1944 when he inspected the wounded INA soldiers who had been returning from the front. The failure of his army, he believed was to a large measure due to the failure of the Japanese. His commanders spoke with bitterness about the inability of the liaison agency to keep the INA supplied with minimum war materials and ration. The INA regiments had been given the tasks of labour forces.

The absence of Subhash Chandra Bose from the battlefield proved crucial in a way. The command relations of the Japanese-INA forces did not permit the INA commanders to take independent decisions. As the supreme commander of his forces, Bose might have been able to use his influence over the Japanese commander to remove quickly at least some of the problems facing his subordinate commanders in the field. But his contacts with forward areas where the INA were operating were never regular and they were completely snapped after the wireless communications broke down.

Although the reasons mentioned above were bound to make the INA's role in the Imphal campaign less spectacular than expected, Japanese sources did not under-estimate the INA. About the performance of the INA in the campaign, the Japanese newspaper 'Syonan Shimbun' quoted a Japanese soldier saying that 'the fighting power of the INA is not in any way inferior to that of the Nippon forces'. The high spirit of the INA shown in the Imphal campaign had been acknowledged by Field Marshal Count Terauchi, the C-in-C of the Southern Army. It has also been admitted that in its defensive role the Division as a whole played a crucial role in the last part of the campaign.

When Japan declared her surrender in August 1945, Subhash Chandra Bose was in Singapore. He was under pressure from his cabinet colleagues not to surrender in Singapore. Bose himself had thought of seeking refuge in the Russian territory and resume his struggle from there. On 16 August 1945, he was on his way to Saigon via Bangkok. His movement could be correctly traced till his arrival at Saigon. According to the official INA source, he was to approach the successively higher Japanese Headquarters till he got the official Japanese guidance regarding the surrender of the INA. His cabinet colleagues maintain that he was on his way to Dairen in Manchuria. He was reported to have met with an accident on 18 August 1945 near at Taihoku air-port which proved fatal. The report of a commission later set up by the Government of India confirmed the news of his death.

The INA occupies an important place in the history of India's freedom struggle. The formation of this force and its heroic exploits

proved beyond doubt that the British could no longer rely upon the Indian soldiers to maintain their hold over India. The universal sympathy expressed all over India for the INA officers when they were tried for treason in the Red Fort at Delhi, gave a rude shock to the British. The honour and esteem with which every Indian regarded the members of the INA offered a striking contrast to the ill-concealed disgust and contempt for those soldiers who refused to join the INA. All these aspects led the British to realize their perilous situation in India. They realized that they were sitting on the brink of a volcano which might erupt at any time. This consideration played an important role in their final decision to quit India. Thus, the members of the INA did not suffer or die in vain and their leader Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose has secured a place of honour in the history of India's struggle for freedom.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.4 Account for the failure of the Indian National Army.

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## **16.3 NAVAL MUTINY, 1946:**

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These years 1945 and 1946 witnessed a new epoch in history of India's freedom struggle. During these two years along with the mainstream of national movement Indian servicemen fought shoulder to shoulder for freedom. In 1944-45 the Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauz) went into action and in 1946 the 'Indian National Navy' (Azad Hind Nausena), (Royal Indian Navy) made its debut in action, which struck the very root of the British administration in India. Many common features were still alive in the two national forces. But the three years were different in the tacit techniques and the effectiveness. The INA had many facets which drew all the forces and supported its dynamic cause within which the objects remained crystal clear. The nation stood as one entity to attain its object. The purposeful and bold steps taken by the Indian Sailors by staging the Naval Mutiny brought then closer to all freedom-loving people of the world.

### **16.3.1 Causes of the Naval Revolt**

During the close of the Second World War, a strong dissatisfaction and discontent grew up among the ratings of the Royal Indian Navy. It was a by-product of many causes. The navy was the abode of unhealthy discrimination between the whites and the natives. The Britishers enjoyed all edges over Indians. They got handsome salaries, sumptuous food, sophisticated clothes and other perquisites. On the other hand the Indians of the same rank

were paid meager salaries, given rotten food, ordinary clothes and hardly any facility worth the name. Thousands of ratings who were recruited to the Navy during the Second World War were victims of this racial discrimination and naturally dissatisfaction was mounting up in their hearts.

Most of the new recruits were worried about their future. They had no idea whether they would be retained or chucked off after the war. They were worried by the thought of their retrenchment. They felt that after working in the navy for so many years, they were hardly of any use and utility in other fields. They found that instead of being sympathetic the British Officers in the Navy humiliated them. This added to their discontent.

However, the chief reason of the grievance of the Indian sailors was to be found elsewhere. The forces were generally kept segregated and aloof from the country's political affairs and the naval force was no exception to that. The naval ratings had neither any knowledge about Gandhi's Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience, Quit India Movement, nor were they interested in them. But the Second World War transformed their outlook, enriched their experience and vitalized their ideas. During the war they saw the Britishers fighting impatient war for their motherland. A poignant question haunted their minds whom they were fighting for? The answer was obviously for their enslaving masters. During those days some of the Indian ships used to sail to South East Asia where Subhash Chandra Bose had become a legend and his splendidly brave deeds were on every tongue. They heard Subhash Chandra Bose's challenging call to the Indian soldiers to cast off British servitude and join INA and fight for the freedom of the nation. Being inspired by the role of the INA, the naval ratings began to ask themselves, if they could do it, why not us? Gradually this idea ran through the Indian Navy and one fine morning an organization was formed secretly in the naval force, under the name of 'Azad Hind'. It was decided that the Indian Naval Force would revolt against the British.

### Check Your Progress

Q.5 What were the causes of the Naval Mutiny of 1946?

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### 16.3.2 HMIS Talwar

February 1946, found India's future poised on the razor's edge of uncertainty. Would freedom follow the end of the war? Or, as in 1918, would Britain seek to postpone the fulfillment of promises given under the spur of need in wartime. Under these

circumstances a group of young India naval ratings from HMIS Talwar, the Royal Indian Navy's shore establishment at Bombay decided to take an active hand in shaping destiny. An act of defiance, planned by a few educated ratings from the Talwar's communication establishment, soon set off a flaming gesture of self assertion by all men of the Royal Indian Navy.

HMIS Talwar housed a little over 1500 communication ratings. They were staunch followers of Subhash Chandra Bose. They made their strategy in line with Netaji's INA movement and sought the leadership directly from Netaji or his real followers in the Congress party. The young boys opened dialogue of direct participation in the country's struggle for full independence.

The repression and onslaught meted out to a large number of ratings in this shore establishment by the naval brass in Bombay was unprecedented. There had been some of the seamen ratings who had already suffered punishments on severe charges of indiscipline such as mixing with the INA prisoners, listening to Netaji's speeches through ship's wireless etc. They were but committed to help the INA men for their unconditional release and to break the shackle of British slavery. They were waiting for an opportunity to show their solidarity with the INA prisoners and to contribute their mite to the freedom struggle. However, it was a difficult job to muster all seamen's support in sympathy with the communication ratings as there a wide gulf between the two branches.

### **16.3.3 Outbreak of the Revolt**

On 17 February 1946 all ratings with the exception of Chief Petty Officers and Petty Officers, of HMIS Talwar, the Royal Indian Navy School of Signals at Colaba in South Bombay, had refused to report for duty. They had also begun a hunger strike. At HMIS Talwar, the ratings serving in the signal school were probably the most literate and intelligent in the entire navy. Some of them had taken to writing on the walls of the establishment, political slogans such as 'Quit India', 'Down with British Raj', 'Victory to Gandhi and Nehru'. However, the authorities were not immediately able to identify the ring leaders, who had called for a 'slow down' strike among their fellow-ratings.

Following the defiance of the ratings, the Commanding Officer, Commander F.W. King got into touch with the Flag Officer, Bombay, Rear Admiral Rattary, reporting the incidents. This report was flashed to Vice-Admiral Godfrey, Flag Officer Commanding, and Royal Indian Navy at Naval Headquarters at Delhi.

The ratings of HMIS Talwar formed a Strike Committee and took control of the signal instruments. They radioed messages to all

naval establishments in India and also to RIN ships at sea, urging all hands to strike. Many establishments picking up the signals were in and around Bombay, Karachi and Cochin on the western coast and in Calcutta Chittagong, Vishakapattanam and Madras on the eastern coast.

On receiving the news of the developments in HMIS Talwar, the ratings in various establishments and ships held close door meetings and quite a majority of them had concurred that they should extend their full support to their fellow ratings in HMIS Talwar. Strike Committees were set up in all establishments, and following the example of Talwar they presented petitions to their Commanding Officers setting forth their grievances. These were immediately reported to Staff Officers and finally channelled through to NHQ in Delhi. The ratings demanded quicker demobilization and resettlement, revision of pay and allowances, better Indian food and speedier Indianisation of the officer cadres of the Navy.

By the second day the news of mutiny spread to all parts of India through newspapers and All India Radio. On the second day of the mutiny events were moving fast in the naval shore establishments and in ships at sea. In Castle Barracks, where all officers were at their posts awaiting further instructions from their Commanding Officer, Captain H.R. Inigo-Jones, normal routine was suspended. The ratings refused to carry out their daily duties and it was thought best not to attempt coercion. There was news of ratings assuming control of various ships in and around Bombay harbour. In various ships, the communication ratings usually formed the leadership of the Strike Committee on the model of the Strike Committee of HMIS Talwar.

The Central Strike Committee in Talwar issued a number of instructions to Strike Committees in other ships and establishments to maintain order and discipline, to avoid violence and to refrain from causing injury or insult to officers.

Indian officers on ships as well as in shore establishments were torn between loyalty and patriotism. Though it was true that their first loyalty lay to the Crown, they nevertheless felt a special sympathy for the cause of the ratings who, rightly or wrongly, believed their mutiny was justified. In most cases the Indian officers acted as mediators between the Strike Committee and British Commanding Officers of ships and establishments, wherever assumption of control was initially sought by peaceful methods. As a result, casualty figures were surprisingly low for a mutiny which had assumed countrywide proportions.

In Castle Barracks the ratings showed increasing restlessness. Eventually in the late afternoon a number of them, led by members of the Strike Committee, declared their intention to proceed ashore to join the others in Talwar. They joined up with other groups of ratings from other shore establishments and together marched through the streets of Bombay on their way to Talwar, where a mass meeting of ratings was to be addressed by leaders of the Central Strike Committee including Leading Signalman Punnu Khan. As they marched in procession through the chief business centre in Hornby road in the Fort area of Bombay, some provocative comments made by passers-by roused passions to fever pitch and suddenly rioting broke out.

The percussionists ran wild, singling out Englishmen for attack, stopping buses and private cars and hauling both British and Indian drivers of service vehicles from their seats. Civilians were forced to remove ties and sun topees, seen as symbols of alien dress and were burned in a huge bonfire at Flora Fountain the police which arrived soon on the scene began to disperse the crowd with lathi charge. The crowd ran helter-skelter before this charge. Pandemonium broke loose as the mounted police emerged on the scene to be greeted by a hail of stones, garbage and abuse. Many ratings escaped through side-streets and narrow lanes. Sporadic rioting continued for a couple of hours until dusk fell, by which time police reinforcement was rushed up, arresting many rioters and driving them away in police vans. Added number of patrol cars equipped with radio sets were on the streets to be on guard against any further violence. Troops reinforcements were brought up from Poona to meet any eventuality.

In the meantime, all the officers, specially the British, were moving out of the ships and establishments which they belonged to fear of being killed. The ratings put forward three political demands to be accepted by the British authorities. They were - (1) To set free all political prisoners, including those from HMIS Talwar (2) To release all INA personnel unconditionally, and (3) To call back armed forces from Indonesia. And last but not the least Quit India immediately. The demand also included the one to stop preferential treatment to Royal Navy ratings and officers.

The ratings came and assembled at the Dockyard according to their plans. They were mostly from the ships and the shore establishments annexed with the Dockyard. Some of the ratings were able to hoist tri-colors, the National flag handed over by the Congressmen, students and laborers in Bombay, over the mast in their respective ships and set fire to the Union Jack in utter disgust. The ratings assembled there did not like the naval uniforms while struggling for the country's liberation from the British yoke. Thus, they wore civilian dresses whichever they had in their possession.



By about 10 or 10.30 a.m. the ratings reached HMIS Talwar when most of the active communication ratings were not present as they went to Castle Barracks for enlisting the support of the seamen ratings for their righteous demands. While passing through the main thoroughfares shouting the slogans, the ratings were voluntarily offered festoons, tri- colour flag and Gandhi-caps. For the first time Bombay witnessed such united and joint action by the defence forces personnel and the citizens of Bombay for a common cause.

Wednesday, 20 February 1946 began with promising results and fruitful events. Different army units, police forces, students and workers organizations calling for sympathetic strikes one after another. Leaders like Aruna Asaf Ali and others enlisted their whole-hearted support. Aruna Asaf Ali said - 'Firmness, discipline and unity on the part of the strikers (mutineers) and the pressure of public opinion should last in a successful of this spontaneous strike'. Foreign as well as national news-papers carried the news of the RIN mutiny in bold headlines. Among the foreign news-papers the 'Daily Mail', 'Daily Telegraph', 'Manchester Guardian', 'New York Times etc. carried the news on inside pages under bold headlines. Among the national newspapers, 'Amrita Bazar Patrika', 'Hindustan Standard', the 'Pioneer' etc. carried banner headlines on the very first page. The British owned news-papers such as 'The Statesman' and 'The Times of India' flashed ambiguous reporting. As the news of the Naval Mutiny in Bombay reached Calcutta, the ratings of HMIS Hoogly mutinied. Even more than Bombay the political atmosphere in Calcutta was the cause of immediate tension. Calcutta was always distinguished for its acute political consciousness.

In Karachi, Indian ratings on board HMIS Hindustan retaliated with two naval guns against fire opened by the military police. The Keamari naval area was cordoned off from the city British soldiers. In the shore establishments of HMIS Chamak, Himalaya and Bahadur, one thousand five hundred ratings had joined the mutiny earlier in the day. HMIS Hindustan was due to sail, but her departure had to be postponed due to twelve ratings, including the wireless operator, going on strike. They put forward a set of grievances similar to that of Talwar.

Ordnance Factory at Jabalpur also sympathized with the ratings and went on strike. RIN establishments at Calcutta, Cochin, Vishakapattanam and other places also went on strike in support of the ratings in Bombay and Karachi. All the coastal units, dockyards workers and defense service personnel sympathized with the ratings by calling a hartal.

In HMIS India at the Naval Headquarters in Delhi, about eighty naval ratings, mainly telegraphists and Signalmen, refused to continue work.

In Bombay some civilians who were sympathetic to the ratings managed to establish contact with them. They supplied all first-hand and timely news about the positioning of the Marine Guards. The students and workers became more and more involved in the direct clash with the Marine Guards. They set fire to a number of Army vehicles and snatched away huge amount of arms and ammunitions for making use against them in battle.

The RIN ratings who sought Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's advice on 22 February 1946 were told by him that 'in the present unfortunate circumstances that have developed, the advice of the Congress to RIN ratings is to lay down arms and to go through the formality of surrender which had been asked for. The Congress will do its best to see that there is no victimization and that the legitimate demands of the naval ratings are accepted as soon as possible.'

The RIN Central Strike Committee was divided on the questions of surrendering unconditionally to the authorities as ordered by the Naval Brass and also demanded by Vallabhbhai Patel. M.S. Khan and other Muslim naval leaders were either influenced by Jinnah's statements in the press or became impatient and unnerved for a long continuous fight. Khan ordered for 'surrender' by the dawn of 23 February 1946 on the wish of the political leaders of the country. However, his decision was opposed by the majority as this was not only unwanted, untimely and perpetrated but also in keeping with the terms offered by the British Naval Authorities.

However, better senses prevailed among the members of the Central Strike Committee. Ultimately it was felt that the mutiny should come to an end or else more loss of lives among the fighting men would only prove futile. Therefore, the surrender was accepted by the ratings with the greatest difficulty. Though they surrendered their arms on the advice of the national leaders and certainly not at the threat of the authorities and both of whom pleaded for no victimization and no vindictiveness. With this consolation to the ratings that they were surrendering their arms to the great sons of Mother India, black flags were seen hoisted on mast tops.

The British authorities issued orders for arresting a large number of the mutinous ratings in RIN and lodge them into two camps in Maharashtra, Mulund and Kalyan and in Sindh (Karachi) called Marin detention camp. The ratings were whisked away without making a list of casualties on both sides as there was none to demand as such. After screening of the arrested ratings, the authorities made three categories.

Under category 1, those ratings against no charges could be made but were taken into custody for interrogation. Thus, they were set free and absorbed in their respective jobs.

Under category 2, the ratings not only lost jobs but also their dues. They did not suffer imprisonment for any period of time. The government is said to have considered their cases and offered employments. They were offered jobs in private and British owned firms.

Almost all the leaders of the Naval Mutiny fell under category 3. They were not only summarily dismissed from service and lost their jobs but everything including all their salaries and allowances as well as all their accumulations etc. They also suffered rigorous imprisonments for some period varying in each case 90 to 365 days. Some of the top leaders also suffered interments for a considerable period of 9.0 days to one year or even more. They were, therefore, not entitled to any jobs whether in the government or even private concerns. Their lives were doomed for ever. In some cases, however, they were secretly employed in private concerns and some broad-minded employers engaged them as a very special case or on compassionate ground.

At Kalyan, all the arrested ratings resorted to hunger strike as a protest against ill-treatment meted out to them by the British guards and having been lodged in tiny filthy cells. Some Indian naval officers were summoned who visited the place and heard of the mal-treatment by the British guards posted there. These officers were kind to the ratings and promised all help and better treatment at par with the political detainees. The arrested leaders wanted to see Gandhi and Patel who promised no victimization after laying down arms. Nothing could deter them or make them to break their fast. Some other Indian Officers persuaded the hunger strikers to give up their fast. But they insisted that they would only obey the national leaders and not the British or their agents. However, the national leaders never turned up. They merely released a press note and the clippings were shown to the arrested men by the Indian officers wherein they had requested the authorities to take very liberal view. The authorities shifted the arrested men to Mulund where many arrested naval leaders and ring leaders such as M.S. Khan and Madan Singh, President and Vice-president of the Central Strike Committee had been lodged.

In the early summer of 1946, the Government of India appointed a high powered Commission of Inquiry to 'determine the cause, extent and consequences of the naval mutiny'. The Chairman of the Commission was Sir Syed Fazal Ali, Chief Justice of the Patna High Court. Other members included Mr. Justice Mahajan of the Lahore High Court, Mr. Justice Krishnaswamy Ayyangar of Cochin, Vice-Admiral W.R. Patterson, Flag Officer

Commanding, East Indies Fleet and Major General T. W. Rees, Commander of the Fourth Indian Division. The Secretary of the Commission was Lt. Colonel Vishweshar Nath Singh. The Commission sat in the Bombay High Court and recorded the evidence of a number of witnesses.

The report of the Inquiry Commission was officially published on 20 January 1947 in Delhi. The Interim Government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru that had been formed in September 1946 as a result of the British Cabinet Mission negotiations, published the findings of the Commission. (1) The basic cause of the Naval Mutiny was widespread discontent arising mainly from a number of grievances which remained un-redressed for sometime and were aggravated by the political situation. (2) The primary cause of discontent was lack of contact between officers and ratings and a feeling of discrimination. There was also a widespread feeling that racial discrimination existed in the service, the main points being that ratings were denied certain concessions and privileges enjoyed by ratings of the Royal Navy, and that European and some Indian officers of the Royal Indian Navy regarded them as inferiors. (3) The next main grievance related to the quality of food. (4) Many of the troubles arose because the pre-war Royal Indian Navy was small and expanded too rapidly. (5) The Commission considered that the Flag Officer Commanding, Bombay, and his officers did not realize the gravity of the situation at a sufficiently early stage and failed to take early and immediate steps to reassert their authority with firmness, and at the same time to take sympathetic steps to alleviate complaints. It was felt that but for these omissions 'the catastrophe' might never have happened. (6) The Mutiny was not organized or pre-planned by any outside agency, though political influence including 'glorification of the Indian National Army' had done much to unsettle the men's loyalty.

The Inquiry Commission was unanimous in concluding that the basic cause of the mutiny was widespread discontent, mainly over a number of service grievances which had remained unredressed for some time and had become aggravated by the political situation.

### **Check Your Progress**

Q.6 Give an account of the Naval Mutiny of 1946.

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### **16.3.4 Consequences of the Naval Mutiny**

The Naval Mutiny calmed down in five days, but the impact of the work done within these five days could have been attained in

fifty years. The British imperialism rested on the Indian forces. But the rulers realized that the very base of their rule had given way. It was clear even to the layman that the continuance of British rule was no longer a possibility. Addressing the Central Legislative Assembly, Minoo Masani Said, 'Why do the people of Bombay unanimously support the mutineers? It is because Indian does not differ. We do not accept the moral basis of your authority. Your law is not law to us. It has not got the consent of the people behind it. That is why when your military or civil law is broken everyone instinctively regards the rebellion with sympathy. In other words, the real cause of the mutiny is the existence of British rule in the country. The ratings who surrendered in the interest of the country were the moral victors of the struggle.

Echoing Minoo Masani, A.R. Siddiqui, a member of the Muslim League said, 'those boys did not go mad overnight when they committed acts to which exception is taken. Whether in Bombay or Karachi these boys have behaved as any group of young folk would have done. Your age is finished and a new age has dawned. Unless you go with the spirit of the age, there will be trouble and misery for my own countrymen as well as for those who would like to crush them.

The Revolt of 1857 had sounded the farewell tunes of the East India Company. Now the Naval revolt sounded the parting tunes of the British rule from India. According to B.C. Dutt, 'The mutiny accelerated the achievement of freedom. It would have come in any event. But the mutiny speeded up the processes

In his book 'Struggle for Freedom', R.C. Majumdar has written that it was no coincidence that the violence of the naval revolt erupted on 18 February, 1946, whereas on 19 February 1946, the British Prime Minister Clement Atlee proclaimed in the House of Commons that a Cabinet Mission would soon be sent to India to finalize the arrangement for India's freedom.

Even Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a large public meeting at Chowpatty at Bombay on 26 February 1946 conceded, 'The RIN episode had opened an altogether new chapter in the history of armed forces of India... The INA episode, the recent RIAF and RIN strikes have rendered the country a very great service'.

### Check Your Progress

Q.7 Describe the consequences of the Naval Mutiny.

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**16.4 SUMMERY:**


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INA was organized in South East Asia, during the World War II under the leadership of Subhash Chandra Bose. This was formed of Indian soldiers and revolutionaries with the help of Japan. Among them people like Rash Behari Bose, Pritam Sing and Baba Amar Sing were prominent who formed Indian Independence League and helped raise the INA. With the help of Japan and Germany INA under Bose launched campaigns against Imphal, Kohima, Arakan and Singapore to fight against the British and make India free from the British. But the INA did not succeed due to several factors. In the same way, Indian National Navy revolted against the British to drive the British out. The Indian ratings housed in HMIS Talwar revolted on 17 February, 1946 which spread through out India. But finally it failed due to certain reasons.

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**16.5 QUESTIONS:**


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1. Examine the circumstance that led to the establishment of the INA.
2. Assess the contribution of Subhas Chandra Bose towards the development of the INA.
3. Analyse the causes of the failure of the INA.
4. Review the causes and the consequences of the Navel Mutiny of 1946.

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**16.6 ADDITIONAL READINGS:**


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1. K.K.Ghose, Indian National Army, second front of the Indian Independence Movement.
2. Tara chand, History of the Freedom movement in India.
3. Sumit Sarkar, Modern India.
4. Sarkar Ghose, The Renaissances to militant Nationalism in India.



## TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE:

### (B2) Freedom and partition

#### UNIT STRUCTURE

- 17.0 Objective
- 17.1 Introduction
- 17.2 Freedom and partition
- 17.3 Summery
- 17.4 Questions
- 17.5 Additional Readings

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#### 17.0 OBJECTIVES:

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After the completion of this unit the student will be able to

- Comprehend the response of English people to the Indian National congress prior to the W.W.I
- Understand the Chinese support to the Indian national movement.
- Know madam Cama and the French response to the Indian national movement.
- Understand the Cabinet Mission plan.
- Know the Indian independence Act of 1947.

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#### 17.1 INTRODUCTION:

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Ever since the war-clouds were darkening the sky of Europe, Indian national Congress made its position quite clear. In his presidential address at the Congress session in Lucknow, in April 1936, Jawaharlal Nehru declared : 'Every war waged by imperialist powers will be an imperialist war whatever the excuses put forward, therefore we must keep out of it'. That this was not a more personal opinion but represented the considered view is clear from its election manifesto issued in August, 1936, which reaffirmed the opposition to the participation of India in an imperialist war. The Congress also made it clear that 'India cannot fight for freedom unless she herself is free'. In pursuance of this policy which the

Congress maintained throughout the war, the Working Committee issued directives to the Provincial Congress Government not to assist in any way the war preparations of the British Government and to be ready to resign rather than deviate from the Congress policy. Thus even before the actual outbreak of the war the Congress had openly declared its non co-operation in war efforts. On 3 September, 1939, war broke out between Britain and Germany, and a proclamation of the Viceroy intimating this act automatically made India a party in the war against Germany. The ministers of the Punjab, Bengal and Sindh pledged the full support of their Provinces to Britain, and their action was upheld by the legislatures. The Indian States were solidly behind the Government. Among the political parties the National Liberal Federation and Hindu Mahasabha offered unconditional support to the Government, while the Congress refused to co-operate with it in any way. Between these two extremes stood the Muslim League. While its High Command did not offer support to Britain, it had done nothing to prevent the Ministries of Bengal and the Punjab from doing so.

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## **17.2 ROAD TO FREEDOM AND PARTITION:**

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The Quit India Movement that posed the internal challenge and the advance of the Indian Army led by Subhash Chandra Bose and supported by the Japanese on the eastern frontier of India, that threatened the very existence of British power in India finally put the country on the road to freedom and partition. The Second World War created such circumstances which ultimately prompted the British to transfer power to the Indian hands.

As the year 1942 drew towards its close, the Indian political situation showed an outward clam, offering striking contrast to the violent scenes that were witnessed during August and September. The Congress leaders being mostly in jail, the field was open to the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha. The former was obsessed with the idea of Pakistan as the one and only issue, while the latter was equally determined to preserve the integrity of the country, achieve freedom with a strong centre and deny to any province, community or section the right to secede.

Political stalemate continued throughout the remaining months of Lord Linlithgow's Viceroyalty. During seven and a half years of his Viceroyalty, Linlithgow had nothing but to look after only the British interests. He failed to comprehend Indian problem in its correct perspective and advise his bosses in London on more flexible and liberal lines. He displayed great capacity to rule with a strong hand but little wisdom to appreciate that the spirit of nationalism once kindled could not be kept suppressed by force for all times to come.



On 18 October 1943, Sir Archibald Wavell came to India as the new Viceroy and Governor-General. Having been the Commander-in-Chief of India, he was very familiar with Indian problems. Before assuming charge, Wavell had made certain statements which created the impression that probably the new Viceroy would take some concrete steps to resolve the Indian deadlock. For example, he observed that 'the political progress of India was not debarred during the war' and that he owed a debt to India which he hoped 'to repay'. Speaking before the Royal Empire Society a few days before his departure for India, Wavell observed that he was going to India 'with a sense of very great responsibility but also with the vision of a great future in front of India'.

However, the optimism created by these speeches and pronouncements was watered down by the attitude of Amery, the Secretary of State for India. He warned the new Viceroy to be sufficiently careful in dealing with the problems of India's constitutional advancement, and in unmistakable terms declared that Britain was not prepared 'to go beyond the Cripps proposals during the war'. Probably to harden Wavell's attitude, Amery repeated the allegation, in the course of farewell address to the new Viceroy, that the Congress leaders instigated 'open rebellion in time of war', and that they would not 'qualify' until they disavowed 'that course of action'.

During the 1943, the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan became more vocal. On 3 March 1943 the Legislative Assembly of Sindh adopted a resolution regarding this demand. This was the first official demand made for Pakistan by a legislature having Muslim majority. The Muslim League Cabinet of Sindh also adopted several anti-Hindu measures. The Muslim League of Sindh carried on propaganda among the people asking them to 'buy everything only from the Muslims'. This harmed the interests of traders of non-Muslim communities.

In the beginning of 1944, the war situation began to cause extreme anxiety to the British Government. During the same time Gandhi's health deteriorated and on 6 May 1944, he and a few members of the Congress Working Committee were released from prison. The Government gave it to appear that the release was solely on medical grounds'. However, the considerations of war were uppermost in the minds of the British rulers and those, it seemed, largely determined the decision to release Gandhi.

Gandhi took the initiative of opening negotiations with Lord Wavell with the object of breaking the deadlock. On 17 June 1944, Gandhi wrote to Lord Wavell to the effect that he was prepared to advice the Congress Working Committee to renounce mass civil disobedience and to give full co-operation in the war effort, if a

declaration of immediate Indian independence were made and a national government responsible to the Central Assembly were formed. In his reply on 27 July 1944, the Viceroy repeated the Cripps proposals, and pointed out that the Indian leaders could be invited to form an interim government only if proper safeguards could be made to protect the interests of racial and religious minorities, depressed classes and the Indian states. On 15 August 1944, Wavell again emphasized that a National Provisional Government could be formed provided the important groups and minorities in the country could agree on the principles and methods of framing the future constitution. Wavell knew very well that this was an impossible condition in the prevailing context. Having followed the policy of 'divide and rule', the British knew that the differences between the Muslim League and the Congress had grown to the stage of becoming unbridgeable. While the Congress gave people the slogan of 'Quit India', the Muslim League countered this by asking Muslims to cry the slogan 'divide and quit'.

Simultaneous with exchange of letters with the Viceroy, Gandhi also approached Jinnah to seek some solution of the communal tangle. Neither he nor the Congress Working committee members at that time had any inclination to see the bifurcation of India into two separate states. Gandhi, however, felt that unless the Congress and the Muslim League made up their differences the freedom of the country could not be attained. Rajaji acted as the mediator. He had been urging all through that the creation of Pakistan alone would solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. Rajaji's formula was that immediately the Muslim League also should agree to the formation of a Provisional Government and after the war ends, the portions which should constitute Pakistan should be settled. Though Jinnah felt happy that even Gandhi had agreed for the partition, he did not accept Rajaji's formula. His stand was that Pakistan should be formed before the British handed over power.

Though Gandhi consented to Rajaji's partition formula reluctantly, he tried to negotiate directly with Jinnah to convince him that partition would be bad. During July-August, 1944, Gandhi corresponded with Jinnah on the basis of Rajaji's formula, but the League President remained non-committal. He then sought an interview and went to Bombay, on 9 September to see Jinnah whom he now began to address as 'Quaid-i-Azam' - the great leader. The talks were frank and friendly but broke down on the issue of Pakistan. On 8 October 1944, Jinnah proclaimed: 'There is only one realistic way of resolving Hindu-Muslim differences. This is to divide India into two sovereign parts, Pakistan and Hindustan'. Thus, in negotiating with Jinnah, both Rajaji and Gandhi had in some way admitted Jinnah's two-nation theory. The Congress which had till then strongly opposed the division of the country had this finally relented and accepted the partition of India. This was a major change in the attitude of the Congress.

Following the failure of negotiations between Gandhi and Jinnah, Bhulabhai Desai, the leader of the Congress party in the Central Assembly tried to negotiate with his personal friend and the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan. In January 1945 he gave to Liaquat Ali Khan 'Proposals for the Formation of Interim Government at the Centre', and according to the Congress historian Dr. Sitaramayya, Desai did it with the permission and concurrence of Gandhi. According to Desai-Liaquat Pact, both in the Central Legislature and the Cabinet of the Provisional National Government, the Muslim League will have the same number of seats as the Congress. However, the proposal of Desai was quite illogical. While the Congress represented the whole country, the Muslim League could claim to represent only twenty-five percent of the total population. The Congress was quite unhappy with the Desai-Liaquat Pact. However, even this most liberal proposal was not acceptable to Jinnah. He continued to demand Pakistan.

The international events of 1945, the changed public opinion in England and the reduced loyalty of the military and the police forces towards their government are important factors which gave a new twist to India's political questions. On 7 May 1945, Germany surrendered to the Allies. Following the success of the Allies, both in England and the U.S.A. public opinion became more sympathetic than before towards India's demand for freedom. The Labour Party of England denounced the Government's action in keeping the Indian leaders in prison.

The combination of these factors forced the Conservative Winston Churchill to put forth his proposals for Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The White Paper containing the new proposals issued on 14 June 1945 comprised the following points - (1) Viceroy to nominate the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council giving balanced representation to the main communities and parity for Muslims and caste Hindus. (2) Viceroy would hold a conference of leading Indian politicians to invite a panel of names from which he would select the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council. (3) Excepting the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief all other members of the Executive Council would be Indians. (4) Commander-in-Chief would continue as the War Minister as long as defense of India was British responsibility. But external affairs would be in charge of an Indian member. (5) The relations of the Crown with the Indian Native States through the Viceroy as the representative of the Crown would not be changed.

The announcement of the above proposals was followed by the release of Nehru, Azad and Patel from prison on 15 June 1945. Meanwhile the Viceroy issued invitations to Indian leaders to advise him at a conference to open in Simla on 25 June 1945.

At the Simla Conference difficulties arose at the outset between Congress and Muslim viewpoints. The Congress party insisted on its claim that being a national organization it must have Muslim as well as Hindu representatives in the proposed new Council but the Muslim League insisted that all Muslim representatives must be nominated by it alone. On 29 June the Conference adjourned to 'enable the delegates to carry on further consultations'. The Congress Working Committee prepared a list of 15 names, but Jinnah informed the Viceroy that he would not be able to submit a list unless certain conditions were fulfilled. The first condition was that the right of the Muslim League to choose the entire Muslim membership of the Council should be recognized. The second demand was that the Viceroy should overrule majority decisions of the Council if these were opposed by the Muslim bloc on the grounds of adversely affecting the Muslim community. Wavell personally conferred with Jinnah, Gandhi, Azad and other leaders to save the conference from failure.~ However, as the Congress and Muslim League leaders failed to agree on the allocation of seats on the Executive Council, the Simla Conference ended in a failure.

During and after and Simla Conference two important events occurred. One was the general elections in England and the victory of the Labour Party, and the other was the surrender of Japan and termination of the war in the Far East. At the opening of the new Parliament of King had declared: 'In accordance with the promises already made to my Indian peoples, my Government will do their utmost to promote in conjunction with leaders of Indian opinion early realization of full self-government in India'. The Government invited Wavell to London in order to review with him the whole situation'.

On his return from London to India the Viceroy announced in September 1945 that His Majesty's Government would soon convene a constitution making body, and that the representatives of the Indian States would also be consulted as to how best could they 'take their part in the constitution making body. Wavell also announced that election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures, so long postponed owing to the war, would be held in November-December 1945. All the parties including the Congress contested in the elections. The Congress won absolute majority in eight provinces (Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Madras, North-West Frontier Provinces, Orissa and United Province). In the provinces of Bengal, Sindh and Punjab and Congress emerged as the second largest party.

While the Indian political parties were engaged in the election campaign Parliamentary Delegation came to India on 6 January 1946 to learn at first hand, what Pethic Lawrence called, 'the views

of Indian political leaders' as to the future of India. Representatives of all British political parties were included in it. The Parliamentarians visited many cities and towns making contacts with leaders of Indian life and with Indian peasants, workers etc:

On 19 February 1946, the British Prime Minister, Clement Atlee stated in the House of Commons that the British Government had decided 'to send to India a special mission of Cabinet Ministers comprising of Pethic Lawrence, Secretary of State, Cripps, President of the Board Trade and A.V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty. The Cabinet Mission landed in Karachi on 23 March 1946. It started conferring with the Congress and League leaders at Simla on 5 May, but on 12 May the talks broke down.

Four days after the end of Simla parleys, the Cabinet Mission announced a plan to serve as basis of agreement between the Indian parties for the future of India. While -rejecting the demand for Pakistan, the Mission recommended a Union of India embracing both British India and the Indian States. The main outlines of the plan were (1) an all-India Union Government and a legislature dealing with foreign affairs, defense and communications, (2) the all-Union Legislature to be composed of equal proportions from Hindu majority and Muslim majority Provinces with representatives of the Indian States, and (4) the constitution making machinery to arrive at a Constitution to be framed by a Constituent Assembly formed of representatives of Provincial Assemblies and of States- each Provincial Assembly being a separate unit..

A day after the announcement of the above plan Lord Wavell invited 14 prominent Indian leaders to serve as members of an 'Interim' Government. The Congress Working Committee accepted the long term proposals, but rejected the principle of equal representation of Congress and the League in the proposed Government. The League accepted the proposals and agreed to participate in the proposed constitution making body, but it made it clear that the ultimate objective of Pakistan was in no way renounced.

Jawaharlal Nehru, who meanwhile had been elected President of the Congress for the ensuing year, entered into correspondence with the Viceroy requesting that the proposed Interim Government should in practice function like a Dominion Cabinet. However, Wavell did not agree to this proposal. Nehru did not care much for the Mission's long-term or short-term plan but as the former provided for a Constituent Assembly he saw no harm in accepting it. On the other hand he saw too many catches in the Interim Government arrangement. On 24 June 1946, the Congress Working Committee expressed inability of the Congress to join the Interim Government. On 26 June the Cabinet Mission announced

that its Plan had been shelved. It, therefore, left India without any results. Both Congress and the League stuck to their viewpoints. The Viceroy proceeded to form a Caretaker Government of permanent officials.

Tired of the deadlock, the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the long-term plan with their own interpretations. But a storm broke out as a result of Nehru's speech which he, as President of the Congress, made at a press conference on 10 July 1946, two days after the AICC meeting at Bombay. In his speech at the AIC meeting on 7 July he had shown his reservations about the Cabinet Mission Plan and vaguely declared - 'We were not bound by a single thing except that we have decided for the moment to do to the Constituent Assembly'. But at the press conference he in unequivocal terms declared that the Congress had made no commitment with regard to either the long-term or the short-term plan of the Cabinet Mission except to enter the Constituent Assembly and that 'we shall accept no outside interference... certainly not the British Government's interference'. He also declared that the Constituent Assembly 'is not going to put up easily for long with the kind of Caretaker Government that exists today' and that the constituent Assembly would function as 'a complete sovereign body'.

Jawaharlal Nehru's speech provided Jinnah with timely opportunity to shift the entire responsibility of the collapse of the Cabinet Mission to the Congress and twist the situation tactfully as well as cunningly in favour of the League. A meeting of the League Working Committee was convened in Bombay on 27 July 1946, and the decision to withdraw League's acceptance of the Plan was taken. A resolution was also adopted, setting aside 16 August 1946 as 'Direct Action Day' - a day on which the Muslims would renounce all titles and honours conferred upon them by the British and would demonstrate their will and determination to achieve Pakistan.

On 6 August 1946, the Viceroy, acting under instructions from London, invited Jawaharlal Nehru to submit proposals for the formation of an Interim Government. Thus, the way was cleared for the Congress to accept the invitation. In a reply to the Viceroy Nehru wrote - 'We should have welcomed the formation of a coalition Government with the Muslim League'. However, in view of the resolution adopted by the League and statements recently made on its behalf, the Viceroy felt that it was not possible to expect that its leaders would agree to co-operate. Nehru suggested that the best course for the Viceroy would be to make public announcement to the effect that he had invited the President of the Congress to form a Provisional Government and that the latter had accepted his invitation. It would then be possible for the Congress to approach the Muslim League and invite its co-operation. The

Congress would welcome that co- operation, but if it was denied, Congress would be prepared to go ahead without it. The Viceroy accepted Nehru's suggestion and on 12 August made the necessary announcement.

After the announcement from the Viceroy, Nehru approached Jinnah directly. The two leaders met at the latter's home in Bombay on 15 August, but their viewpoints were so divergent from each other that they could not be reconciled. Jinnah was not at all interested in the coalition Government. Nehru informed the Viceroy of the League's decision and pleaded that he should be allowed to proceed without Jinnah and the League.

The Muslim League proceeded to observe August 16 as 'Direct Action Day'. From the early morning, bands of Muslim Leaguers, allegedly joined by large numbers of 'goondas' from the suburban areas began killing innocent Hindu men, women and children, looting of their shops and godowns and burning of their houses and other belongings. For three days, the bloodshed and orgy of violence continued, and reportedly about 7,000 persons were done to death, thousands were wounded. The Hindus also retaliated. Bengal and Bihar faced the worst of the communal violence. Trouble spread to other parts of the country also. Gandhi left for East Bengal on 6 November to restore communal harmony. .

On 2 September 1946, the formation of true Interim Government with 12 members, 3 being Muslims, was announced. Nehru became its Vice-President. Jinnah described Wavell's action in forming the Government as 'unwise and unstatesmanlike' and 'fraught with dangerous and serious consequences'. Wavell and Nehru opened talk with Jinnah, and succeeded, on 15 October 1946, in persuading him that the League nominees would enter the Government. The League got 5 seats and on 24 October, the Government was reconstituted.

The Muslim League, it appeared, had no intention, from the outset, to co-operate with the Congress in the governance of the country. The Muslim League ministers, specially Liaquat Ali Khan as Finance Minister obstructed the functioning of other ministers. The attitude of the Muslim League towards the Constituent Assembly was also not favourable. On 14 November 1946 Jinnah declared boycott of the Constituent Assembly, and asserted that only 'the creation of Pakistan and Hindustan would bring about a solution of the present communal situation'.

During the closing months of .1946, the Muslim League launched a vehement campaign for its Pakistan demand. The Labour Government decided to prepare the ground for Indian independence. Prime Minister Atlee invited Nehru from Congress,

Jinnah and Liaquat Ali from the League and Baldev Singh from the Sikh Conference to London, on 30 November 1946, to discuss some of the issues arising out of the positions taken by them. However, the leaders returned to India without any agreement. The League Members in the Interim Government continued to pursue obstructionist tactics, and the attitude of the Congress and League leaders towards each other hardened still further.

The functioning of the Interim Government, the League's decision to boycott the Constituent Assembly and the failure of the London Conference convinced the authorities that Britain must withdraw from India by a fixed date. The transfer of government responsibility into Indian hands, Atlee in particular felt, alone would resolve the Congress-League deadlock. On 20 February 1947, he stated on the floor of the House of Commons that Britain intended to transfer power to 'responsible Indian hands' not later than June 1948.

Lord Wavell viewed with dismay Atlee's decision to withdraw from India without finding a solution to the communal tangle. Wavell was recalled and Lord Mountbatten was sent to India as the next Viceroy with instructions 'to expedite the withdrawal'. However, before accepting the offer from Atlee, Lord Mountbatten insisted on having power to make his own decisions in India. He arrived in Delhi on 22 March 1947.

Shortly after his arrival, Mountbatten began to hold talks with the Congress, League and Sikh leaders. He first tried 'very hard' to revive the Cabinet Mission Plan with Jinnah in order to retain the unity of India, but latter would not hear of it. Lord Mountbatten found that differences among them were so wide that partition of India alone would solve the problem. Having himself become convinced he began to convert the Congress leadership to the idea of partition. They began to accept the idea of partition as an inevitable evil. After converting the Congress leaders, Mountbatten devised a scheme whereby the elected members of the Constituent Assembly should vote Province by Province, whether they wished power to be transferred to a unified or partitioned India. Then the plan was taken by his Chief of Staff, Lord Ismay, to London and was placed before the Cabinet on 2 May 1947. On 17 May the Viceroy met the Indian leaders and learnt from Nehru that his plan as it then stood would be rejected by the Congress, League and the Sikhs equally. The plan was redrafted and taken to London by Mountbatten himself. On 30 May he returned and held more discussion with the Congress, League and Sikh leaders.

The Mountbatten Plan sought to affect an early transfer of power on the basis of Dominion Status to two successor states, India and Pakistan. Congress was willing to accept Dominion



Status for a while because it felt it must assume full power immediately and meet boldly the explosive situation in the country. Besides Dominion Status gave breathing time to the new administration as British officers and civil service officials could stay on for a while and let Indians settle in easier into their new positions of authority. For England, Dominion Status offered a chance of keeping India in the Common wealth.

The announcement that India and Pakistan would be free was made on 3 June 1947. The Princely States were given the choice of joining either of the two. Immediately after the partition had been decided upon, steps were taken by His Majesty's Government in consultation with the Viceroy, to prepare a draft of the Indian Independence Bill. On 4 July 1947, the Indian Independence Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, Atlee. High tributes were paid to Atlee and Mountbatten by members of both sides of the House. The Bill was passed without any amendment by the House of Commons on 15 July 1947 and by the House of Lords on the following day. It received Royal assent on 18 July 1947. The Congress Party mouthpiece, 'The Hindustan Times', described it as 'the noblest and greatest law ever enacted by the British Parliament'. The organ of the Muslim League, 'The Dawn', said by this 'momentous and unique legislation' Britain was 'entitled to the highest praise from all freedom-loving peoples of the world'.

At mid-night on 14 - 15 August 1947, the British rule in India came to an end, and the power was formally transferred to the two new dominions of India and Pakistan which officially came into existence. Just before mid-night Nehru made a great speech in the Assembly and said, 'Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom'. Lord Mountbatten was sworn in as the first Governor-General of the Indian Dominion on 15 August, and he administered the oath of office to the Cabinet.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1 Trace road towards freedom and partition of India.

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**17.3 SUMMERY:**


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Since the Indian National Congress was founded, it began to receive positive response from the international communities. Among them China, Ireland, Germany, U.S.A., Turkey and France were prominent countries. China being a good neighbour, President Chinag Kai Shek was sympathetic and also visited and wrote letters to American President requesting him to solve Indian problem. Indian revolutionaries went to various countries, sought their support and fought against the British to make India free. Consequently, the Indian National movement came into the final stage after the World War II. The events like Rajaji formula, Simla Conference, Cabinet Mission, Interim Government and the Declaration of Prime Minister Attlee regarding leaving took place. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 freed India on 15 August, 1947.

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**17.4 QUESTIONS:**


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1. Examine the British response to the Indian national movement.
2. Analyse the International response to the Indian national movement with Special reference to elites.
3. Examine critically the Cripps proposals of 1942.
4. Analyse the declaration of Atlee with special reference to the Mountbatten plan.

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**17.5 ADDITIONAL READINGS:**


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1. Chatlerjee Partha, The Nations and its Fragments, colonial and post colonial Histories.
2. Anita Inder Singh, The Origins of the partition of India, 1936-1947.
3. S.R. Malhotra, Towards Indian Freedom and partition.
4. B.R. Ambedkar, Pakistan or Partition of India.



## **TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE:**

### **(C) The Depressed Classes and Women as New Forces**

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 18.0 Objectives
- 18.1 Introduction
- 18.2 Attempts of the Social Reformers to Emancipate the Depressed Classes
- 18.3 Women.
- 18.4 Summery
- 18.5 Questions
- 18.6 Additional Readings

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#### **18.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After reading, this Unit the student will be able to: -

- Know the Untouchables termed as the Depressed Classes.
- Understand the Depressed class movement.
- Explain the work of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in the emancipation of Depressed classes.
- Understand the work of Social Reformers in the upliftment of the Downtrodden People,
- Known the participation of Women in the Indian National Movement.

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#### **18.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Since the Vedic Age the Hindu society had been organized on the basis of caste system. While the higher caste Hindus enjoyed considerable privileges and rights according to their placing in the social scale, the lower caste had been subjected to a number of restrictions. Throughout the ages the lower caste Hindus had to live a life of misery, poverty, deprivation and

oppression in the hands of the higher caste Hindus. These lower castes are known as the depressed classes. The extreme class exclusiveness was manifested through the evil practice of untouchability. These depressed classes were excluded from such elementary rights as the right to enter public temples or the use of public wells and tanks. Though the depressed classes belonged to the Hindu society they were considered as the out-castes. The untouchables were assigned such low functions as those of scavengers. They were legally and socially prohibited from any other profession. They had no right to study. They were segregated in the villages and were forced to live in separate areas marked for them.

The curse of untouchability had been exercising the minds of enlightened men since ages. The great humanitarian and religious movements launched by the Buddha and Mahavir in ancient times and the Bhakti Movement propagated by Ramanuja, Ramanand, Chaitanya, Kabir, Nanka, Tukaram and others, during the medieval period hardly affected the age-old inhuman practice of untouchability. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there began the reform movements to liberalize the caste structure and rationalize the religious practices. Socio-religious reform movements such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Servants of India Society made great efforts to eradicate the evil of untouchability and uplift the depressed classes.

The depressed classes formed about one-fifth of the whole Hindu population. According to a census report of 1931, the estimated number of the depressed classes was 50,192,000 in the whole of India. As such, the emancipation of this large section of the Hindu society was very vital for the regeneration of India.

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## **18.2 ATTEMPTS OF THE SOCIAL REFORMERS TO EMANCIPATE THE DEPRESSED CLASSES**

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The emancipation of the depressed classes was one of the chief aims of the social reform movements in India. All of them were unanimous that the evil institution of untouchability should be destroyed. Many great leaders made it their life's mission to emancipate the depressed classes and better their conditions.

India's National struggle was also a struggle against Economic exploitation and Social Inequalities. Thus, the nature of India's national struggle was much wider in scope it was a struggle for the emancipation of man. The movement of the people in the Princely States, the Peasants and Workers Movement, the Socialist Movement, Depressed Class Movement was complementary to the Liberation Struggle, while Communalism proved extremely harmful to

it. The British rule coincided with a number of technological and legal changes that affected the traditional arrangement in various ways. The new mode of travel and the migration to new industrial and urban setting eased some of the restrictions on commensality and contracts. Some reform movements were initiated either on humanitarian grounds to upgrade the life of the down trodden like the one led by Jyotirao Phule in Maharashtra towards the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or the Brahmo Samaj earlier by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his associates with a parallel groups like the Parthana Samaj.

In pre-British India, education was under the monopolistic guidance of the Brahmin caste. This education trained the people in accepting the caste system and built up a caste conscience in the individual accepted caste as divinely ordained and considered infringement of caste rules as sacrilege. But the British Government secularized education. It was based on European liberalism. A section of the educated class of the Hindu society, who studied the liberal philosophy and democratic institutions of the Western countries, become the standard bearer of anti-caste revolt. As education spread to the lower strata of the Hindu society, it kindled libertarian impulses among those age long victims of the Hindu social system.

The judicial and administrative practices introduced by the British based on the Principle of equality before law. Introduction by the British of a uniform criminal law removed from the purview of caste, many matters that used to be adjudicated by it earlier. No longer were caste governing bodies to decide on matters of assault, adultery, rape and so on. Even in certain matter of civil law, like marriage and divorce, the authority of caste started getting eroded. Legislations like the widow remarriage acts or the castes disabilities removal act did have considerable impact on the authority of caste. British administration took up the question of civil equality for lower castes. The nationalists too opposed caste system. They pleaded in the equality of men and demanded that the temples should be thrown open for the low caste people. They stood for inter-caste marriages and inter-mixing. The people belonging to low castes were encouraged to participate in demonstrations and strikes. The role of the political movements such as the non-cooperation movement (1920-22), the civil disobedience movement (1930) and others in strengthening national consciousness among the people was tremendous.

### Check Your Progress

Q.1 Discuss the efforts of the social reformers in the emancipation of the Depressed Classes.

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#### 18.2.1 The Depressed Class Movement

The Indian Society was based on inequality. Some people in the society were regarded as untouchables. They were denied education and were required to do tasks considered as despicable. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many social reformers tried to improve these conditions, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Narayan Guru, and many others were in the forefront of the reformist movement. They created awareness in society regarding the injustice that was done to the depressed classes.

Jyotiba Phule (1827-1890) born at Mahuli in the Shudra caste was the first to declare an open and organized war against untouchability in modern India. Right from his childhood, he had been subjected to mental torture, humiliation and degradation by members of upper caste Hindus. After completion of his primary education, he joined the Mission school at Poona in 1841. It was there in the Mission school, where he learnt the concept of universal equality of man. Thereafter, for about 40 years, Jyotiba Phule championed the cause of the untouchables, the oppressed and women, and waged a war against the tyranny of the upper caste Brahmins. In fact, he infused and inculcated revolutionary spirit in the underdog, the depressed classes.

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule established the first school, only for the untouchable girls at Poona in 1848, which no doubt, was the first of its kind in India, ever set up by an Indian. In his relentless struggle for securing the right of education for women and in particular, for low castes, his wife Savitribai Phule, worked hand-in-hand with him for the cause of female education.

In his fanatic zeal, as a champion of the cause of the untouchables, Phule did not spare even Mukundraj, Dnyaneshwar, Ramdas and other Maratha saints, who had recognized the practice of untouchability. In 1873, Mahatma Phule established Satya Shodhak Samaj (Truth-Seeking Society), the goal and belief of which was to worship one God as the father of all, irrespective

of caste, colour, creed, sex and place of birth. It, thus, eliminated the role of the middleman, viz, to Brahmins, between man and God and deprived them of their high status. He started two papers, one, 'Dinbandhu' in 1877 and 'Dinmitra' in 1887 to rouse and mould public opinion in favour of the untouchables and his ideas, which started gaining currency.

Following the footsteps of Mahatma Phule, Gopalbaba Valangkar, Shivram Janba Kamble and others devoted themselves to the task of eradication of untouchability. Valangkar in his treatise 'Vital Viddhwansan' condemned the inhuman custom of untouchability. Shivram Janba Kamble, himself an untouchable, became an important leader of his community. He organized the first conference of the untouchables in India. He had worked as editor of Samavanshiya Mitra, a monthly magazine at Poona. He appealed to the British Government in 1910 to improve the conditions of the depressed classes.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, the King of Kolhapur State, had a strong desire initially to educate Marathas and make them get higher education at no cost or at minimum cost. In 1901, he opened the first Boarding House known as the Victoria Maratha Boarding for the Maratha students. Out of his earnest desire, after 1902, on his direct and indirect support near about 21 Boarding Houses were opened in the Kolhapur State. All these boarding houses were established for each and every caste in the Kolhapur State. Because of such a growth of Boarding Houses in the State he used to say proudly, that 'England is the Mother of Democracy, Kolhapur is the Mother of Boarding Houses in India'. In the same year that is 1902 he introduced 50 percent Reservation and Liberal Schemes of Grants and Scholarships to the Backward Classes in the Kolhapur State.

In the South, Ramaswami Periyar and the Justice Party, and some other reformers worked for the uplift of the depressed classes and rendered valuable services. Karmaveer Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde, Maratha by caste, was another important social reformer of Maharashtra, who promoted the cause of the depressed classes. He was educated at Oxford, where he made a study of comparative religions. After his return from England he worked for the upliftment of the depressed classes. In order to have first-hand knowledge of the conditions of the depressed classes, Vitthal Ramji Shinde toured all over India. In 1906, with the cooperation of Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar he established the 'Depressed Classes Mission of India'. Its branches were set up in some of the important cities and towns of India. After the death of M. G. Ranade, Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar led the Indian National Social Conference. In 1928 Chandavarkar passed a resolution in the conference aimed at the eradication of untouchability and all

disabilities arising out of it. To improve the living condition of the depressed classes, Chandavarkar established schools, dug wells and gave other amenities to them.

Mahatma Gandhi also took up the problem of untouchability and exerted in all possible ways for the removal of that social evil. He used to say that untouchability was a stigma on Hindu society. With the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the prominent leader of India's freedom struggle, the cause of the depressed classes got additional encouragement. He called the depressed classes as 'Harijans' i.e. the people of God. Gandhiji argued that the demand for self-government or independence from the British rule was a democratic demand. As such, the Indians should also practice democracy in the social sphere and reconstruct social relations between individuals, castes and communities on the basis of democratic principles, the principles of equality, fraternity and rights of man. Gandhiji established the All India Harijan Sevak Sangh in 1932 for the upliftment of the depressed classes. He also started the weekly journal 'Harijan', which promoted the cause of the untouchables. He mixed freely with the untouchables, lived in their midst and worked for their betterment. He even lived in the Bhangi Colony in Delhi so as to draw the attention of the people to the need of eradicating the age-old and inhuman practice of untouchability. Gandhiji established a number of schools, ashrams and hostels for the improvement of the conditions of the depressed classes. As the national movement progressed the issue of untouchability became a political problem. In their attempt to divide the Hindus the British Government announced the Communal Award in 1932. By this Communal Award granted by Ramsay Macdonald, the Prime Minister of England, the depressed classes were granted separate electorates. Gandhiji could see in the Communal Award a sinister motive of the British Government to divide the Hindus by recognizing the depressed classes as a separate political entity.

Dr. Bhimrao Ramaji Ambedkar (1891-1956) was born in 1891 in a Mahar family, who took a doctorate from Columbia University, and became a Barrister in 1923, in London, was an ardent champion of the cause of untouchables. His outstanding achievements and brilliant success in life set a precedent for his people, and impressed upon them the need, to develop fully their talents and potentialities for greater achievements in life rather than be content as mere sweepers and scavengers in the society. He symbolized the highest aspirations of the untouchables and served as a moving spirit of their liberation movement. He waged a three-front war for emancipation and upliftment of the untouchables, namely, through education, agitation, and organization. He has been aptly described as 'the Lincoln of India'. The liberation movement of the Untouchables, launched by Dr.



Babasaheb Ambedkar, aimed at securing social or civil rights, political rights and economic rights for them, so that they entitled for equal status and opportunities, as other men.

After completing his higher education abroad, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar came to India and devoted himself to the welfare of the depressed classes. His aim was to build up a society on the principles of freedom, equality and brotherhood. He was convinced that inequality and injustice on the depressed classes would never be removed unless the caste system was totally destroyed. He firmly believed that social equality was the right of the depressed classes. He could not tolerate the situation where the depressed classes were dependent on the mercy of the so-called higher castes. He wanted to build up a movement based on self-respect. With that objective, he established an association named 'Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha' in July 1924, with the sole objective of winning civil rights for the untouchables by law. However, in 1923, the Government of Bombay had already issued a notification allowing free access of all public places to the untouchables. The Mahad Municipality had opened the Chowder Tank for use by the untouchables. On 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1927, the day, which is celebrated as the 'Independent Day of the Untouchables', Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar himself drew water from the Chowdar Tank, which was followed by other untouchables. The Caste Hindus, no doubt, filed a case against him, which he won in the High Court at Bombay. He, then, organized the temple entry movement, under the leadership of Rajbhoj, at Poona (Pune). In 1937 at Nashik, Kala Ram Temple entry movement was launched under the leadership of Dadasaheb Gaikwad, a local Depressed Class leader. As both movements failed to achieve their objective, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, out of sheer frustration, called upon his people, at Yeola Conference, to renounce Hinduism and embrace any other religion that would guarantee equality to them. This led to the conversion of the untouchables to Christianity, or Islam, or Buddhism. In 1956, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar himself was converted to Buddhism.

From 1929 to 1937, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar struggled to secure political rights for the untouchables, first through the Simon Commission, and then, at the Round Table Conference, which was attended by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar himself and Rao Bahadur Srinivas, as the representatives of the Depressed Classes. This produced the desired effect and, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1932, the British Premier MacDonald announced the Communal Award, which provided for separate seats to the Depressed Classes in the provincial legislature, and the right of double vote, which enabled them to elect their own representatives, and also vote in the general constituencies. However, Gandhiji opposed this tooth and nail and declared a fast unto death until the Award was altered. To save the life of Gandhiji, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar

agreed to a compromise formula, under the Poona Pact in 1932 that took away the right of double vote and separate electorates for the Untouchables. However, the number of seats for the Untouchables in Provincial Assemblies was increased.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, then, formed the Independent Labour Party, which won as many as 12 out of 15 reserved seats from the Depressed Classes constituencies in the Bombay Presidency, in the general election, held in 1937. In 1942 All India Depressed Classes Conference met at Nagpur, which the formation of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation, later renamed the Republican Party.

To improve economic conditions of the Untouchables, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar called upon the government to recruit the Depressed Classes in military services, which would enable them to improve their standard of living and prove their abilities as courageous men. In 1933, the Government of India made reservation of certain posts in the Government Services for the Depressed Classes. In 1942, a fixed percentage of posts were reserved in the Government Services for the Scheduled Castes. In 1947, this percentage was increased to 12 percent and further concessions were made to them in regards to the age-limit for recruitment.

As the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar saw to it that social, political and economic justice was secured for the members of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and the other weaker sections of the Indian Society, under the Constitution. In sum, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was, without doubt, the messiah and a guiding spirit for the Untouchables and a symbol of their highest aspirations.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar started newspapers to give vent to the extreme hardships of the Dalits, and to create social awareness. Through his papers 'Mookanayak', 'Bahishkrit Bharat' and 'Janata', he conveyed his thoughts to the people. The contribution of Dr Ambedkar in bringing into existence a social order based on equality is unparalleled in modern India.

Besides the efforts of the social reformers and national leaders to emancipate the depressed classes, certain economic factors also contributed towards the abolition of unsociability. The introduction of railways, buses and other modes of public transport system increasingly brought both the touchable and untouchables physically closer. Modern industries impartially recruit the workers from all communities. In labour movements both touchable and untouchables fight together. A new class-consciousness has

begun to replace the caste-consciousness. In cities the restaurants, theatres and other public places proved to be the powerful solvents of the caste prejudice.

### Check Your Progress

Q.2 Give an account of the Depressed class movement.

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#### 18.2.2 Constitutional Guarantee

The Constitution of independent India has provided the legal frame-work for the abolition of untouchability. The Constitution forbids any restrictions on the use of wells, tanks and bathing ghats or on the access of shops, restaurants, hotels and cinemas. However, in spite of all these efforts the evil of untouchability still persists in rural India. The term 'Depressed Classes' to denote Untouchables who were later called Scheduled Castes under India Act 1935, and the later Indian Constitution of 1950. The Untouchables are now popularly known as Dalits. The Constitution guaranteed that there shall be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of general electorate seats in the provincial legislatures. The representation of the Depressed Classes in the Central Legislature shall likewise be on the principle of joint electorates and reserved seats by the method of primary election in the manner provided for in clause above for their representation in the provincial legislatures. In the Central Legislature 18 per cent of the seats allotted to the general electorate for British India in the said legislature shall be reserved for the Depressed Classes. The system of primary election to a panel of candidates for election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures as herein-before mentioned shall come to an end after the first ten years, unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement under the provision of clause 6 below. There shall be no disabilities attached to any one on the ground of his being a member of the Depressed Classes in regard to any election to local bodies or appointment to the public services. Every Endeavour shall be made to secure a fair representation of the Depressed Classes in these respects, subject to such educational qualifications as may be laid down for appointment to the Public Services. In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be ear-marked for providing educational facilities to the members of Depressed Classes.

**Check Your Progress**

Q.3 Bring out the Constitutional provisions for abolition of untouchability and the welfare of the Depressed Classes.

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**18.3 WOMEN**

In the Great Uprising of 1857 some Indian women boldly contributed their mite directly or indirectly for the cause of freedom. Maharani Lakshmibai 'the bravest of all rebels' shines like a bright star on the horizon of that mass movement, which was without least doubt, aimed at overthrowing the Company rule. She was, among others, very ably and wholeheartedly assisted not only by the Hindu women but Muslim women also. Nevertheless, the number of such dauntless women crusaders was very few. Thereafter came a period of Orthodoxy among both the Hindus and Muslims particularly with regard to their womenfolk. 'Purdah' system which had entered India with the arrival of Muslims had come to stay and its grip was further tightened during the British period. The mobility of women was by and large restricted to the four walls of their dwellings. An average Indian woman had no access to school, college and other public places. A fairly large majority of them lived as deaf and dumb driven cattle. Those belonging to urban elite and also allowed relative freedom constituted only an iota. In a way it was Dark Age for the Indian women.

It has been very often and correctly said that India's struggle for independence has also been a struggle for Indian woman's socio-economic emancipation. And the sole credit goes to Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, who included woman uplift as an important part of the Congress constructive programme. The resurgence of the Indian womenfolk has also been helped by some foreign born women like Dr. Annie Besant, Neili Sengupta, and Margaret Cousins who zealously worked in India, for country's freedom and its socio-economic development. Apart from the achievement of political independence, the second best benefit that flowed out of our Freedom Movement has been the liberation of our women, particularly those hailing from urban settlements. However, the path shown by them is continuously being followed by the rural women also. Many of the enlightened women then, plunged into India's freedom movement. And it is very interesting and worthwhile to have a peep in their glorious service in this regard. References have already been cited related to the works of Dr. Annie Besant, Madam Cama, Bina Das,

Pritilata Wadedar, Kalpana Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Neili Sengupta, and Indira Gandhi etc. However, there is a long and unending list of the women who enthusiastically participated in this crusade in one way or the other. But the sufferings and sacrifices of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Kasturba Gandhi, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Sucheta Kriplani, Lilavati Munshi, Sister Nivedita, Amma A. V. Kuthimalu, Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya. Chaudharani Sarla Devi, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, Kamala Das Gupta, Durgabai Deshmukh, Basanti Das, Nanibala, Rama Devi, Swaran Kumari, Urmila Devi, Subbamma Dhuvri, Lakshmibayamma Unnava, Kadambini Ganguly, Suhasini Ganguly, Santi Das, Avantikabai Gokhale, Hema Prabha, Meera Behn, Sharda Behn, Aruna Asaf Ali, Behn Satyawati Devi, Lakshmi Menon, Muthulakshmi Reddi, Lila Roy, Ramabai Pandita, Violet Alva, Indumati Sinha, Rani Gaidinliu, Annie Mascarene, etc. etc. are worth remembering.

### **1. Women and the Indian Freedom Movement**

When the history of India's fight for Independence comes to be written, the sacrifice made by the women of India will occupy the foremost place - Mahatma Gandhi Jawaharlal Nehru had remarked, when most of the men-folk were in prison then a remarkable thing happened. Our women came forward and took charge of the struggle. Women had always been there of course but now there was an avalanche of them, which took not only the British Government but their own men folk by surprise. The entire history of the freedom movement is replete with the saga of bravery, sacrifice and political sagacity of great men and women of the country. This struggle which gained momentum in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, threw up stalwarts like Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, C. Rajagopalachari, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chander Bose. Their number and stature often gives us an erroneous impression that it was only a man's movement. But it is not so. Many prominent women played a leading role in the freedom movement. The important place assigned to women in India dates back to the time of the Vedas and Smritis. Manu declared that where women were adored, Gods frequented that place, During the Vedic age the position of women in society was very high and they were regarded as equal partners with men in all respects. Who had not heard of Maitri, Gargi, Sati Annusuya and Sita? In keeping with this tradition, burden of tears and toils of the long years of struggle for India's freedom was borne by the wives, mothers, and daughters, silently and cheerfully. The programme of self-imposed poverty and periodical jail going was possible only because of the willing co-operation of the worker's family. In the various resistance movements in the villages, the illiterate women played this passive but contributory part as comrades of their men folk.

### Check Your Progress

Q.4 Trace the participation of Women in the Indian National movement.

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### 2. Madam Bhikaji Cama

Madam Bhikaji Cama the first Indian woman socialist was also the first Indian woman revolutionary who fought for her motherland's freedom, after the 1857 Uprising. This 'dynamite of freedom was' born at Bombay on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1861. She was 24, when the first session of the Indian National Congress was held at Bombay (Mumbai). The atmosphere then built by the founders of the Congress appealed and touched the chords of her heart. The same year she was married to Rustomji Cama. Since both of them had divergent views, their marriage proved an utter failure. In 1902, when she fell very sick, her husband sent her to London for treatment, and in all probability to get rid of her. In England she established rapport with the Indian revolutionaries, particularly Shyamaji Krishan Varma, living there. Before that she came in contact with Dadabhai Naoroji there, in whose election she worked day and night notwithstanding her not too well health and limitations. She 'aroused public opinion against the thralldom' to which the British subjected India. Little wonder the British Government was 'mortally afraid of her outspokenness'. Her activities enraged the British Government and before she could be arrested, she arrived in Paris and continued her revolutionary activities there also. She did not appreciate the 'politics of petition' and held a belief that the British imperialists listened only to the language of revolution. That is why she often said 'resistance to tyranny was obedience to God'.

Madam Cama lived for three decades in Paris and her residence offered shelter to underground Indian, French and Russian revolutionaries. She also started the publication of Vandematram, from Geneva and this paper served the cause of the India's Liberation Struggle for nine years. She attended the Socialist Congress at Stuttgart in 1907 as a 'fraternal delegate'. And it was there that she, after her thrilling speech, hoisted the Indian flag in Europe. The flag was tricolour and was inscribed with Vandematram. This flag symbolizing the 'Indian National Flag' had also been designed by her. It is said that she prepared this flag out of one of her saris. However, during the later part of the First World War, when France and England became close allies, the French

Government, to oblige the British government, arrested her for her anti-British India activities and kept her in Jail for three years.

At the age of 74 in 1935, when she was weak and prolonged ill she was allowed to return to India since she had desired to be in her motherland during her last days. When she reached Bombay in November 1935, she was so weak that she was straightway, with the help of stretcher and ambulance, taken to a Parsi Hospital, where after about eight months she died on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1936 'unwept, unsung and unhonoured' and 'virtually unannounced and uncared'. The last word uttered by her was Vandematram. She was that great and fearless freedom fighter who long ago declared that India would be a Republic with Hindi as National Language and Devnagari the National script. A Street in Bombay has been named after her. How apt has been the tribute paid by Rajaji, to Madam Cama, 'I am one of the age-group in politics who are fully aware of the brave and tenacious part Madam Cama played when patriotism was sedition and not a paying concern'. But otherwise how callous have we been towards such self effacing workers when the birth-centenary stamp in her honour 'was issued after much haggling, and belatedly, on 26<sup>th</sup> January (Republic day) 1962'.

### Check your Progress

Q5. Explain the role of madam cama in the Indian National movement.

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### 3. Dr. Annie Besant

Dr. Annie Besant was born on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1847 and she entered the public life in very dramatic circumstances. Her marriage with Frank Besant in 1867, a fatal blunder in her own words, was very unhappy. One day after being maltreated by her husband, she tried to poison herself to death. The moment she was about to swallow poison, her inner-self exclaimed, 'You coward, you want to end your life because of such trifle difficulties, arise, awake, learn to serve, and try to find the Truth. Could you not overcome these trifles for the sake of finding Truth'? Mrs. Besant in no time threw away the bottle of poison. In 1873 she separated from her husband. She arrived in India on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1893 and made Adyar near Madras her home. Before that she had widely travelled in Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand but did not find peace of mind anywhere.

In India she was moved by the pitiable socio-economic conditions of the Indians groaning under the oppressive British yoke. Apart from starting Home Rule Movement, she started arousing the Indians through her forceful writings and fiery speeches. The British government interned her and her internment sent a wave of indignation throughout the country. While in Jail in 1917 she was unanimously elected the Congress President. Apart from her revolutionary activities she took a leading part in many social activities. It was she who started Central Hindu College at Varanasi, which later on provided the foundations for the Banaras Hindu University. She also worked for the emancipation of Indian women and for their right to franchise, in collaboration with Sarojini Naidu and Margaret Cousins. She was a vegetarian and wrote nearly 300 articles and books on India and Indian life. She passed away peacefully at Madras on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1933 and desired her epitaph to carry the simple words, 'She tried to follow the Truth'.

### Check your Progress

Q 6. Highlight on the contribution of Annie Basent to the Indian national movement.

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### 4. Kasturba Gandhi

It is said that behind a great and successful man, there is very often a great woman. This saying is true in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, who had a very faithful wife in the person of Kasturba Gandhi popularly addressed 'Ba'. In the beginning, Kasturba had resisted and shown reluctance to follow the ways of Gandhiji. However, once she got convinced about the ways and conduct of her husband, she completely identified herself with his life and works. She undoubtedly through her devotion and dedication to Gandhiji and his ideals became a tower of strength for him and steadfastly participated in all the experiments of Gandhiji. Even while in South Africa she was imprisoned for leading the women Satyagrahis. In 1930 and 1932 she was put behind bars in India for picketing wine and foreign cloth selling shops. In 1930 she even entered the native State of Rajkot for organizing an agitation to obtain political reforms. There also she was kept under detention at Tramlā. During the 1942 agitation she was again arrested for violating the prohibitory orders at Bombay. During all the fasts of Mahatma Gandhi she took one meal a day, consisting of milk and fruit only. She might have joined her husband in fasts, but as a true Indian wife, she thought it her foremost duty to nurse her husband in such conditions. Thus she



took only such meal that could give her enough strength to perform her duty. On Mahashivaratri day (22<sup>nd</sup> February) of 1944 she died while in detention at Agha Khan Palace. She had endeared herself to the Indian masses by her acts of valour and sacrifice to such an extent that the grateful nation collected a sum of Rs. 1.25 crores, in those days, for setting up Kasturba Gandhi Trust.

### **5. Sarojini Naidu**

Sarojini Naidu, the 'Bharat Kokila' or 'Nightingale of India', was a 'born poetess' who composed her first 300 lines verse at the age of 13. Born on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1879, she matriculated at the age of 12 and stood first in the then Madras Presidency. She went for an intercaste marriage with Dr. Govind Rajulu Naidu and had a successful married life. On the inspiration of Gopal Krishna Gokhale she entered public life. However, her contact with Gandhiji was a turning point in her career and thereafter she plunged head long into politics as well as social work. The women delegation, that called upon Montague and Chelmsford, for demanding right of vote for Indian women, was led by her.

In the Salt Satyagraha, after Gandhiji's arrest, she led the peace marchers and was arrested on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1930. During the 1919 movement she had distributed thousands of copies of the 'banned pamphlet' in Bombay. She was elected the Congress President in 1925. In her Presidential address she roared like a lioness saying 'in the battle for liberty, fear is the one unforgivable treachery and despair, the one unforgivable sin'. She also took part in the Second Round Table Conference. During Quit India Movement she was again jailed. When Gandhiji went on a fast in Agha Khan Palace, Pune, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu ceaselessly nursed him. After independence she was the first woman Governor of Uttar Pradesh. She died at Lucknow on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1949, while in office. With manly courage she was feminine to the core. How correct has been Pandit Nehru when he said, 'Just as the Father of Nation had infused moral grandeur and greatness to the struggle, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu gave it artistry and poetry and that zest for life and indomitable spirit which not only faced disaster and catastrophe, but faced them with a light heart and with a song on her lips and smile on her face... whatever she touched, she infused with something of her fire'.

### **6. Vijayalakshmi Pandit**

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, whose maiden name was Swarup Kumari Nehru, was born to Moti Lal Nehru on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1900 at Allahabad. She rose to be the first Woman Minister, first Woman Ambassador and the first Woman President of the U. N. O. She entered the Freedom movement neither because of her father Moti Lal Nehru nor because of her brother Jawahar Lal

Nehru but after coming in contact with Mahatma Gandhi. She had been one of the closest women lieutenants of the Mahatma. She even later on, inspired her husband Ranjit Sitaram Pandit, to join the liberation struggle. Mrs. Pandit was jailed for her nationalistic activities thrice in 1932, 1940 and 1942. During the Salt Satyagraha she led processions and picketed the liquor and foreign cloth selling shops along with her sister and her baby daughters. When in 1944, she was released on reasons of ill health she found that all leaders were behind bars while a meeting of almost all nations had been called at San Francisco for deliberations on the proposed U. N. O. Though India was still a colonial country, yet some body (other than the official delegates) could be there to raise the issue of India's freedom. The British India Government would have hardly issued her a passport for this purpose. However, her daughters at that time were studying in the United States. She obtained a passport for paying a visit to her daughters. Thus she arrived in San Francisco and addressed many meetings highlighting the pitiable conditions of India and brutally repressive acts of the British. She was sure to be imprisoned on her return to India but to her good luck the Labour Party soon came to power in Britain and this party had been very sympathetic to the cause of India. Hence Mrs. Pandit returned to India in 1946. Mrs. Pandit is that woman freedom fighter, diplomat, administrator, parliamentarian, stateswoman and social worker who has been honoured with sixteen honorary doctorates at home and abroad.

### Check your Progress

Q.7 Comment on the role of Kasturba Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu and Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in the Indian national movement.

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### 7. Sucheta Kriplani

Sucheta Kriplani, the first Indian Woman Chief Minister was born to Bengali parents in June 1908 at Ambala. She later on got married to Acharya J. B. Kriplani, an outspoken but a fearless crusader in the Freedom Struggle. She was earlier on the Teaching Faculty of the Banaras Hindu University. In 1932 she entered public life as a social worker and in 1939 entered politics and joined the Indian National Congress. In 1940 she offered individual Satyagraha at Faizabad and was imprisoned for 2 years. During the Quit India Movement, she went underground

and rendered remarkable service of secretly organizing anti-British resistance. However, she was captured at Patna in 1944 and kept in solitary confinement in Jail for more than one year.

#### **8. Durgabai Deshmukh**

Durgabai Deshmukh, the wife of C. D. Deshmukh, was imprisoned for three years for participating in the Salt Satyagraha. During this Satyagraha when leaders like Rajaji and T. Prakasam in South were busy in organizing other facets of the movement, it was Durgabai who led a group of salt law breakers to Marina Beach at Madras. It proved a grand success. A severe lathi charge could not break the spirit of those Satyagrahis. Durgabai was injured in the lathi charge and arrested. A self made woman she rendered remarkable service in the field of social welfare and particularly for serving helpless women and orphan children. Small wonder, in recognition of her talent, selfless service and devotion to a noble cause Pandit Nehru appointed her the first Chairperson of the Central Social Welfare Board. She had also been the founder President of the Andhra Mahila Sabha.

#### **9. Indira Gandhi**

Indira Gandhi who rose to be a powerful and First Woman Prime Minister of the Largest Democratic Republic of the World i.e. India, got initiated in the Freedom Struggle at an early age of 12 when she started organizing 'Vanar Sena' at Allahabad. This organization came to enroll 60 thousand members in whole of India. Her father being intensely involved in the national movement, and she having lost her mother at a very tender age, Indira Gandhi learnt struggling against many odds, taking independent decisions and becoming self reliant at a very young age. In 1938 when she attained the age of 21 she became a member of the Congress. In 1942 movement she was Jailed for 13 months. Even at a later stage she along with her husband Feroz Gandhi was interned for participating in anti-British activities.

#### **10. Suhasini Ganguly**

Suhasini Ganguly was a militant woman revolutionary and she helped the revolutionaries like Rasiklal Das, Lokenath Bal, Anant Singh, Bhupendra Kumar Dutta, Balwant Kumar Mazumdar, Sasadhar and Jiban in every possible way and always kept motherland before self. At a critical time when the Chittagong group of revolutionaries needed a shelter for their activities to be vigorously pursued but unnoticed by the outer world, she offered her services. The revolutionaries desired a married couple to act as their host but no genuine married couple was ready to undergo the risk. Thus Suhasini agreed to pose as Sasadhar's wife so that their fake-household could be used for the related purpose. Ignoring all prejudices she started regularly using conch-shell bangles and vermilion mark on her forehead. On 1<sup>st</sup> September

1930 her household was raided by a European police party. In the imminent exchange of fire Jiban was killed while Suhasini and Sasadhar were arrested. However, while Jiban etc. were engaging the police party Suhasini helped other revolutionaries to disappear from the scene. She was later acquitted by the court of the charge of harbouring for want of concrete evidence. But was detained in 1932 on suspicion and released only in 1938. She suffered police torture in more than one way. Small wonder she turned to be a 'Communist' and ceased to have any sympathy for Gandhiji's ideals. During 'Quit India Movement' she offered refuge to Hemanta Tarafdar for which she had to suffer another term of 3 years detention. In 1965 she had an accidental fall which resulted in the development of tetanus and consequently her death.

#### **11. Bina Das**

Bina Das, Santi Das, Indumati Sinha, Kalpana Dutt, and Pritilata Wadedar were those brave and courageous women who following the lines of Anusilan and Jugantar parties committed daring feats of shooting and killing the officials responsible for harassing and torturing the revolutionaries. All of them excepting Pritilata were Jailed and tortured indifferent ways but they were proud of being in the service of their motherland. Avantikabai Gokhale, Suhasini Ganguly, Hema Prabha, Sharda Ben Mehta and Lila Roy, were those fair sex freedom fighters who actively associated themselves with one or the other or all major phases of the Freedom Struggle. All of them were detained and imprisoned on more than one occasion for taking part in Civil Disobedience, Salt Satyagraha, Non-cooperation and Quit India Movement.

#### **12. Anasuyabai Kale**

Anasuyabai Kale, a nominated member of the C. P. Legislative Council resigned after two years in 1930 to join Gandhiji's Satyagraha movement. She was Jailed for 4 months during this movement. In 1937 she was elected from Nagpur to the C. P. and Berar Legislature. She was also appointed Deputy Speaker. It was on her insistence that the Government had to appoint a Commission of Enquiry to probe into the charge of illegally pressurizing the authority by a Minister Sharif, to release a Government Officer Jaffar Hussain who had been convicted for raping a young girl. On the findings of the Commission Sharif had to resign his Ministership. During 1942 movement seven Gond 'Girijans' were sentenced to death under Martial Law. It were Kale's ceaseless efforts which saved those tribal from gallows. Mrs. Kale was elected to Lok Sabha in 1952 and 1957. She however, died in 1958.

#### **13. Shanti Ghosh**

Shanti Ghosh was another militant woman revolutionary who had the occasion of meeting Subhash Chandra Bose, Sarojini

Naidu, Aurobindo Ghosh and some Jugantar Party workers. On 14<sup>th</sup> December 1931 she along with her classmate Suniti shot dead Stevens, the District Magistrate of Comilla. This daring feat of two young girls sent a wave of wonder, gaze and thrill throughout the country. Both of them were sentenced to transportation for life. Nevertheless, in 1937 she was released along with other political workers. After release she continued her studies and got married to a revolutionary in 1942. Later on she joined Congress and participated in the constructive programmes of the party. For a long period she has been a member of the Bengal Legislative Council as well as Assembly.

#### **14. Lila Roy**

Lila Roy was the daughter of Girish Chandra Nag who resigned his membership of the Legislative Assembly against the levy of salt tax. Lila Roy had been a prominent student leader during her college days. A votary of female education she had been an active member of a Revolutionary Party, Sri Sangha till 1925. In those days it was a problem to secure hostel accommodation for politically conscious girls in Calcutta Colleges. Lila Roy helped in the building of a 'Chhatri Bhavan' in Calcutta to house such girls. To involve fair sex in Mahatma Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha she formed 'Mahila Satyagraha Sangh'. In 1920 the reins of 'Sri Sangha' came into her hands after the arrest of Anil Roy, the leader of the Sri Sangh'. Lila Roy had also to go to Jail along with her comrades in 1931. In 1937, she joined the Indian National Congress and by 1937 became a close Lieutenant of Subhash Chandra Bose. She was a nominated editor of Netaji's 'Forward Block Weekly'. Before Netaji, left India he handed over the charge of his activities in northern India to Lila Roy and Anil Roy. After the failure of Cripps's Mission Lila Roy was arrested and kept under detention till 1946. The same year she was elected to the Indian Constituent Assembly Bengal. In Partition riots she saved many lives and her activities were highly praised by Gandhiji. However, she was the votary of complete independence and not mere home rule. She hated regionalism and wanted the women to take active part in freedom movement. Many of the Women fighters of that period were recruited by her and trained primarily by her.

#### **15. Lakshmibayamma Unnava**

Lakshmibayamma Unnava was a multi faceted wonderful personality of Andhra Pradesh who revolutionized the Andhra region in particular by her activities in the fields of freedom movement, Harijan uplift, removal of untouchability, women emancipation, widow remarriage and cottage industries. Her husband Unnava Lakshminarayana, a philosopher, writer and a novelist was equally interested in the welfare of the down trodden, depressed classes, exbhited have-nots and women. Little wonder Mrs.

Unnava was known as the mouth piece of her husband. However, Mahatma Gandhi's influence worked wonders and this impact turned the rebel in Lakshmibayamma into a revolutionary. She thereafter took a leading part in Non-cooperation, Satyagraha and Quit India Movements. And thence she never knew failure in her activities. She was one of those early Andhra stalwarts who agitated for a separate Andhra Province. Between 1911 and 1942 she was arrested for six times and she had to undergo long internments for her participation in three important Gandhian movements. 'Saradaniketanam', the institute started (1923) and nursed by her in Guntur continues to serve destitute women. Renowned as a great Andhra woman, she during Freedom Struggle delivered hundreds of public lectures in Andhra region exhorting the people to join the sacred 'Mahayajna'. After independence she retired from politics although she carried on her other activities. She died in 1956 after a prolonged illness.

#### **16. Aruna Asaf Ali**

Aruna Asaf Ali a radical political leader was a nationalist in her youth and early career and turned to be a socialist at a later stage. She entered the arena of political activity and freedom movement because of her husband Asaf Ali, a nationalist Muslim who was in the thick of freedom struggle following the footsteps of the Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Nonetheless, it were Ram Manohar Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan and Jaya Prakash Narayan, the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party who came to influence her out-look and socio-political ideology. Little wonder, gradually she turned to be an uncompromising radical nationalist. For her active participation in Civil Disobedience Movement (1930) and Individual Satyagraha (1941) she went to Jail. During the 1942 Movement she went underground and evading arrest worked for the regeneration of the Socialist Group in places like Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi. She appeared above ground in 1946 only when warrants against her were withdrawn. Although she became the President of the Delhi Pradesh Congress but her radical views came in conflict with the Congress policies and programmes. She left Congress to experiment with different social groups. An emotionally sensitive radicalist she could not adjust to the fast changing political landscape of the country, once the heroic age had passed.

#### **17. Rani Gaidinliu**

The contribution of Indian women to our 'Freedom Fight' is incomplete without the well deserved reference to the brave activities of a dauntless young tribal fair sex crusader Rani Gaidinliu. This valiant Naga girl came in the close contact of Jadonang at the tender age of 13. Jadonang was that tribal hero who wished to drive away the British from Manipur. He was captured and sent to gallows at Imphal on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1931 and it is gathered that he

had entrusted the arduous responsibility to Gaidinliu who still carried un-broad shoulders. Nevertheless, Gaidinliu took up the responsibility and vigorously accelerated the independence movement that had received a set back in the death of Jadonang. To suppress the movement, the British let loose a reign of terror in the Hills.

Gaidinliu also explained to her followers the fight waged by Gandhiji for ousting the British. From time to time she kept her followers abreast of the Gandhian movements and these developments strengthened the freedom movements in Manipur Hills also. People started accepting her as 'Goddess of the Hills'. She went underground to direct the revolt. The British started practically a hut to hut hunt for Gaidinliu. All girls bearing this name were harassed and interrogated. Many such girls changed their names. Even Gaidinliu herself changed her name to Dilenliu to escape arrest. Several villages were burnt, many persons killed and property worth lakhs confiscated but the British could not capture Gaidinliu. Nonetheless, in a sudden and surprise attack on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1932, she was captured when she was only 17 years of age. The Political Agent at Kohima sentenced her to life imprisonment. However, Gaidinliu behind bars became more popular than Gaidinliu at large. Her followers continued the fight unabatedly. It was Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru who during his Assam visit in 1937 gave her the apt prefix of Rani i.e. 'Queen'. The 1937 Congress Government tried to secure her release but failed since Manipur was not a British Territory. Pandit Nehru persuaded even lady Astor, the powerful Lady Member of the British Parliament to get Rani Gaidinliu freed but the Secretary of States for India stood in the way. She was freed from Tura Jail in 1947 only when India became politically an independent country.

### **18. Margaret Cousins**

Margaret Cousins, an Irish woman crusader, after fighting for the voting right for women in Ireland, arrived in India along with her husband and advocated the same cause for the Indian Women. In Ireland she even went on hunger strike inside the Jail. She accepted Indian citizenship and worked for the socio-economic emancipation of the Indian women. She joined hands with Annie Besant and Sarojini Naidu and helped in the founding of many women associations to bring about an awakening among them. 'Women's Indian Association' came into existence with her efforts in 1917 at Madras. And it was the result of her ceaseless efforts that the Madras Legislature granted the right of franchise to women in 1921. By 1926 this right had been provided in the whole country. 'Akhil Bharatiya Mahila Sammelan' i.e., 'All India Women Congress' was also started by her in 1927. In 1931 she organized the 'All Asian Women Conference' at Lahore. Credit goes to her for bringing many an Indian women to the forefront of Freedom

Movement by enlightening them. In 1923 she was interned in Vellore Jail for violating an emergency ordinance. In 1943 she got a stroke of paralysis but continued to take interest in all related activities till she died in 1954.

#### **19. Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddy**

Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddy was that First Indian woman who for her merit and services in the fields of social service and medicine was nominated to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1926. She became the first Indian Woman Legislator and later on Vice-Chairperson of the Legislative Assembly. As a protest against torturing women and use of repressive measures against female agitators during Salt Satyagraha and Non-cooperation Movement, she resigned her offices and jumped into the Freedom Struggle.

#### **20. Lakshmi Swaminathan**

Many of us do not know that there were hundreds of women officers and soldiers of the 'Azad Hind Fauj' who fought side by side with their male counterparts. Captain Lakshmi Swaminathan gave a very able leadership to the 'Rani Jhansi Regiment' of the Azad Hind Fauj. To begin with, Indian women then living in South-East Asia offered their services to Netaji on his call and they were trained in fighting as well as Nursing. They were so much devoted to Netaji and dedicated to the commonly cherished goal that, apart from attending to nursing duties, they offered to take up arms against the enemy and prove worthy of the name given to their Regiment. Once they sent a representation to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose written in blood and signed by each member in her blood to permit them to participate in active combats. Many of them died in the malarial conditions, unusually heavy rains and swampy conditions prevailing in the dense equatorial forests. But none of them preferred to retreat or hide or feign. They did a commendable work by way of nursing the wounded and ailing soldiers. How can we afford to forget their services to the motherland? Not even the mortal remains of many of these brave daughters of India could reach our country, but the message of 'service before self and country before self' given by them should work as a beacon light for coming generations of men and women alike.

#### **Check Your Progress**

Q.8 Write a note on the participation of Indira Gandhi, Aruna Asaf Ali, Rani Gaidinliu, Lakshmi Swaminathan in the Indian National movement.

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## 8.4 SUMMARY

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Since the ancient period, Indian society had been under outdated systems, traditions and superstitions. One of them was caste system, which divided the society into various categories. The last segment of it was subjected to a number of restrictions, due to that it was not able to live as a man as other. It was to live life of misery, poverty, deprivation and oppression. It came to be known as untouchables or depressed classes. Many great leaders tried to emancipate them. Among them Mahatma Phule, Gopalbaba, Shivram Jalba Kamble Shahu Maharaj and Mahatma Gandhi were wellknown. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar was the Champion of them and he lived and worked for them. Due to him only the ill system of untouchability came to an end.

The second section which suffered a lot was the woman in the society. Even then Indian woman contributed a lot towards the development Indian Society. Among them Cama, Besant, Naidu were prominent.

Besides, these women crusaders, there have been thousands of women who wholeheartedly participated in India's Freedom Movement. Many of them were greatly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and happily underwent all types of sufferings and repressive measures. It is evidently clear, that Indian women did not lag behind and it has been a great contribution of Gandhiji that he, through his programmes and calls, brought about socio-economic uplift of the Indian women, no mean an achievement.

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## 18.5 QUESTIONS

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1. Analyse the efforts made by social reformers in the emancipation of the Depressed classes.
2. Assess the work of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar as the liberator of the Depressed classes.
3. Give an account of the work of Madam Cama and ANNIE Basent in the Indian national movement.
4. Examine the contribution of women to the Indian national movement.

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## 18.6 ADDITIONAL READINGS

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1. Tara Chand, History of the freedom movement in India, vols 1-4.
2. Ali Aruna Asaf, The Resurgence of Indian women .
3. B. R. Ambedkar., Partition of India.
4. Parekh Bhikh, Colonialism, Tradition & Reform.

